

THE *Nation*

APRIL 14, 1956

20c

Spring Books

Edmund Wilson

Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings"

Maxwell Geismar

The Terror of John Dos Passos

Kenneth Rexroth

Molloy, Godot and Samuel Beckett

John Lehmann

Prose and Poetry in Welfare England

Also essays, reviews, poetry by:

Josephine Herbst, May

Sarton, Richard Eberhart,

Harold Clurman, Lawrence

Lipton, Kay Boyle, Guy

Wint, Rolfe Humphries,

William Carlos Williams,

W. S. Merwin, Dan Lang-

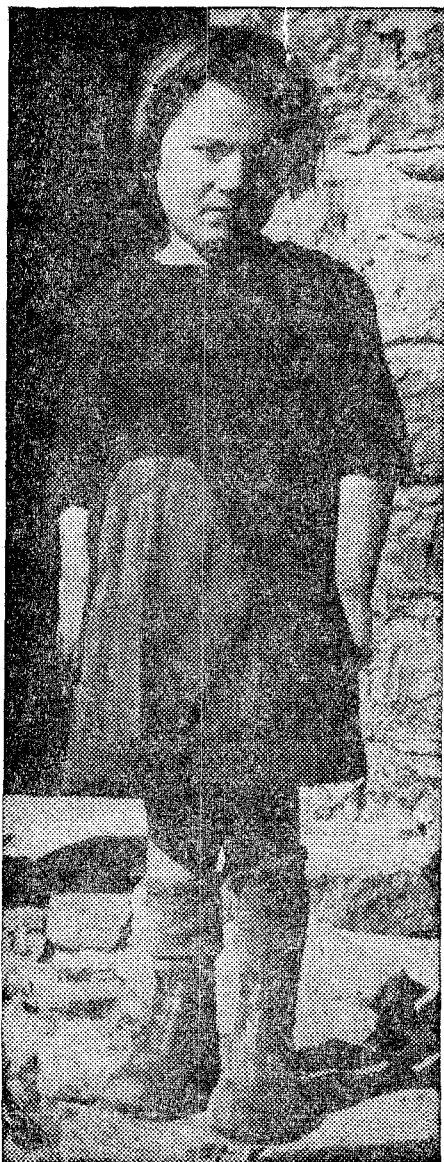
ton, J. S. Manifold, Howard

Nemerov, Kenneth Burke.



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EAST TENNESSEE STATE COLLEGE
Johnson City, Tennessee



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The Shape of Things

The Not-so-Vital Center

Observing that Easter was early this year even if spring was late, the members of Congress approved a ten-day vacation for themselves and then promptly hightailed it out of town for a bit of sightseeing and relaxation. Not that the Congress has been overworked this session. At the Easter break, which usually marks the session's mid-point, Congress had increased taxes for the voteless residents of the District of Columbia and passed two major bills, of which the President has vetoed one (the natural-gas giveaway), and the other—the crazy-quilt farm bill—deserves a veto. All sorts of theories are currently offered by way of explaining this less-than-dazzling performance: the paralyzing effect of the desegregation issue, the rapid depreciation of Senator Lyndon Johnson's prestige and the fact—cited as such—that there are really no pressing issues before Congress at the moment. But isn't there, perhaps, a simpler explanation? There seems to be no political force in or out of Washington today capable of generating the energies needed to overcome the massive inertia of the Center. The forward movement of American politics has been brought to a nearly dead halt by the passionate determination of both parties to preempt the Center position. Modern democratic political systems are not self-starting; they need a "Left," in the generic sense, to set the not-so-vital Center in motion.

Six Years of Torment

Wasn't it Bernard Shaw who said that to spank a child in rage was one thing, to punish him "after due deliberation" was cruelty? The article by Charles P. Larrowe in this issue (page 291) points up one of this magazine's basic objections to capital punishment: the unconscionable delay in the carrying out of sentences that, we suspect, no one really wants to see executed. Six years is a long time for two waste-products of our society to spend in miserable contemplation of their crippled consciences. The six-year delay in the case of the two unhappy young men from the Middle West who joined the navy to "see the world" bothers us rather more than the unconstitutional denial of the right to counsel. Surely we have many readers who will want to join us in lifting a burden from the conscience of future generations of Utahns—and a better, kindlier, more charitable people will not be found in the West—by

urging the governor and the prison board to instruct those five riflemen not to fire from their secure port-holes on May 11.

*

Incidentally, the *Toronto Star* is entitled to high commendation for its intervention in the case of Wilbert Coffin (see *The Nation*, March 10, page 197). Coffin was executed on schedule but this fact did not anesthetize the *Star's* conscience. Not satisfied with the verdict, its editors have convened a prominent Citizens' Committee to work with *Argosy's* Court of Last Resort in an effort to prove that Coffin did not commit the murder for which he was executed. A key witness at the trial died recently under circumstances that suggest he took his own life. The *Star* has convened a committee of distinguished Canadians to probe, with the aid of *Argosy's* stable of sleuths, the facts of this strange case. Once again, the magnificent common sense of the Canadians is being put to the test. We are confident that their verdict will be fair.

Let's Save the South

An elaborate ritual has been devised to welcome home American heads-of-mission and good-will emissaries who have been visiting Mark Twain's "heathens in outer darkness" to find out what it is about us that makes them love us less than we desire. By a practice that is rapidly becoming customary, the home-coming emissary reports first to the President and then to Mr. David Lawrence—for a tape-recorded interview with *U. S. News and World Report*. The latest proconsul to return to Washington with reports of what is going on "out there" is The Reverend Billy Graham. Dr. Graham's account of his visit to India is sharply at variance with the report from Calcutta that we carried in last week's issue; by his reckoning he outdrew Bulganin and Khrushchev by a two-to-one margin. But Asians will be delighted to learn that while their continent is not yet "saved," its chances of salvation are rated excellent.

Now that he has returned, Dr. Graham will want to use his remarkable influence to persuade his fellow white Southerners of the Protestant faith that the time has come to end racial discrimination below the Mason-Dixon line. For it must have occurred to him—to quote from a recent comment in *Christianity and Crisis*—that "it is precisely in the most heavily 'churched' section of the nation, by all counts, the most self-consciously 'Christian' region, that the churches are most segregated and have the least impact on public policy." Few Amer-

In This Issue:

EDITORIALS

The Shape of Things 289

ARTICLES

Notches on a Chair 291

by Charles P. Larrowe

Appeasement in South Africa 294

by Julius Lewin

Elsa Maxwell Loves Mazola 295

by Walter Goodman

A Touch of Fascism 297

by J. Alvarez del Vayo

New Orthodoxy for Old 299

by Peter Geyl

SPRING BOOK SECTION

The Ruins of Memory 302

by Josephine Herbst

The Theme is Fear 305

by Maxwell Geismar

The Climate of Welfare 306

by John Lehmann

Faces and Landscapes (a poem) 308

by W. S. Mervin

The Other Side of the Mind 309

by Richard Eberhart

Oo, Those Awful Orcs! 312

by Edmund Wilson

Sonnet in Search of an Author (a poem) 313

by William Carlos Williams

The Shield of Irony 314

by May Sarton

Evidence of Conscience 316

by Kay Boyle

Sonnet on Nightmares (a poem) 317

by J. S. Manifold

Lore (a poem) 318

by Howard Nemerov

Poetry and the Vocal Tradition 319

by Lawrence Lipton

On the Poet William Carlos Williams (a poem) 322

by Dan Langton

Impatience of the East 324

by Guy Wint

The Point is Irrelevance 325

by Kenneth Rexroth

Portrait of a Poet (a poem) 326

by Rolfe Humphries

The House of Discord 328

by Harold Clurman

Song (a poem) 330

by May Sarton

MUSIC 330

Big Claus and Little Claus (a poem)

by Kenneth Burke 331

TV FORECAST 332

CROSSWORD PUZZLE 332

by Frank W. Lewis

George G. Kirstein, Publisher

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ican religious leaders could more tactfully or skillfully bring this paradox to the attention of the white Protestant South that Dr. Graham. Let him journey through the region speaking to audiences as large as those he drew in Asia, reporting to his fellow Southerners on what he saw and heard in the Far East. Billy Graham has immense influence in the South; with his help the South can be saved no less than Asia.

The Arrest Of Claude Bourdet

Guy Mollet, the French Premier, is a Socialist. Like his Foreign Minister, Christian Pineau, he has been disturbed lately by a tendency on the part of American policy and opinion to be critical of French colonial policy. But he has not encouraged us to take a more charitable view by causing the arrest of Claude Bourdet, editor of *L'Observateur*, for having referred, in quotation marks, to "the dirty war" in Algiers. The spectacle of an independent and courageous editor being marched off to Fresnes prison after his home was raided and his office ransacked is not calculated to allay American misgivings about French colonial policy. And when the arrest is directed by Socialists, those Americans who are not annoyed will certainly be confused. With the Soviets releasing political prisoners who have been rotting in jails and prison camps for the last twenty years, it is embarrassing to find a French government headed by a Socialist juggling editors for the expression of anti-colonial views.

"Keeping America On the GO"

Such is the banner line that appears on a remarkable full-page advertisement which the Timken Roller Bearing Company has been running in some of the nation's leading newspapers. Beneath the caption is a huge aerial photograph of some beautifully contoured farm acreage, the landscape being devoid of farmers and farm habitations with the exception of some tiny structures in the far distance which just might be rabbit warrens. Under the photograph appears this startling statement: "Where 2,328,324 farmers disappeared without a trace." It seems that in 1940 the census-takers reported the existence of 8,833,324 American farmers; today, at latest report, there are only 6,505,000. "Where did they go?" asks Timken. But the question—which interested us, too—is never answered; the balance of the copy is devoted to a lyrical account of Timken bearings which "roll the load," "practically eliminate friction," and "last and last"—apparently longer than the farmers!

Like Timken, we are delighted by the news that tractors now save two billion man-hours a year and that mechanical pickers do the work of forty men. But it's only in fairy stories and Hitchcock movies that people "disappear without a trace." Timken—with an assist from Benson—should answer that question left dangling in the center of the ad: where *did* those farmers go?

NOTCHES ON A CHAIR

Utah Firing Squad . . by Charles P. Larrowe

Salt Lake City
EVER SINCE capital punishment was first officially used in Utah—in 1858—when two Indians were executed for killing the children of a Mormon bishop, the state has given a condemned man a macabre choice: he can be shot by a firing squad or he can swing by a noose. Of the forty-one men executed in the history of the state, only five have chosen hanging. If the prisoner refuses to specify his preference—as one man did last year, protesting his innocence to the end—the state chooses the firing squad. The condemned man, strapped to a chair, awaits the bullets from five rifles sticking through holes in a burlap screen twenty-five feet away. Since 1919, prison officers have been using the same rickety old office chair, which bears a notch cut for each man who died in it. The chair now has eighteen notches.

A new state prison was built in 1950 to replace the ancient and dilapidated Sugar House prison (where Joe Hill, the Wobbly ballad writer and organizer, faced a firing squad in 1915) and space was set aside in the new building for an electric chair or gas chamber. But Utahns are loathe to part with the firing squad and neither of the "less barbaric" devices have been installed. Thus, two young men who have been lodged in the prison death house for more than six years will soon face a firing squad.

The longest and most complicated legal battle in Utah criminal history has been waged to save Vern Braasch and Melvin Sullivan from execution, but they have lost their last appeal. To most Utahns, the execution is long overdue: the youths committed a brutal, senseless murder, and they have admitted their guilt. To some, however, the matter is not so simple:

CHARLES P. LARROWE, *Utah correspondent for the A. C. L. U., is the author of Shape-Up and Hiring Hall.*

to them, an execution without a new trial would be unjust because of the grave constitutional questions involved in the case.

In 1949, when the murder occurred, Braasch, the older of the two, was twenty-one. Sullivan, his companion, was nineteen. Both came from broken homes, and both quit school early in life to wander aimlessly about the country. The boys had been discharged from the navy on the West Coast (Braasch came originally from Iowa and Sullivan from Missouri), and after bumming around California for a while, they decided to go to Utah for the hunting season. En route, they burgled several stores, taking, among other things, two .22-caliber pistols. Arriving in southwestern Utah, they took a room in Cedar City, paying a week's rent in advance. To this day, they don't know why they went to Beaver, a village of 1,700 persons about fifty miles to the north, where the crime was committed. They had been drinking all day in a Cedar City tavern, and someone must have told them that hunting was good "up around Beaver." Apparently on an impulse—their room rent had three days to go—they boarded the bus for Beaver.

The town was crowded with deer hunters, and service stations and restaurants were staying open all night. On night duty at the Standard station was Howard Manzione, a popular, newly-married, twenty-one-year-old basketball player at the agricultural college. A little after midnight Braasch and Sullivan strolled into the station and chatted with Manzione, leaving when a friend of Manzione's came in to make plans for a deer hunt the next day. They came back at 2:30 A. M., determined to rob the station and steal a car. Braasch got behind Manzione and tried to knock him out with his pistol-butt. When Manzione resisted, Braasch shot him in the back and Sullivan shot him in the arm. Manzione fell to the floor and the would-

be robbers, terrified by what they had done, shot him twice in the head. They fled on foot, leaving the money in the till untouched. Circling the town, the two murderers emerged on the highway south of Beaver and flagged a bus back to Cedar City. They stayed in their room all day, taking a bus for Las Vegas that night.

Less than thirty minutes after they arrived in Las Vegas—at 4:30 A. M.—they were picked up and booked by Las Vegas police on suspicion of a burglary in California. While Braasch and Sullivan sat in their separate cells wondering what the police would do next (neither of them had ever been arrested before), a bulletin was received in the police station reporting the murder in Beaver. On a hunch, the police decided to question the boys about it. After questioning them separately, the police used a technique so old that it probably would not have worked on any but unsophisticated, gullible youths. Each was returned to his cell and a short time later officers came to Sullivan (the younger) and told him that Braasch had broken down and told the whole story. Sullivan thereupon made a complete confession. When this was shown to Braasch, he too confessed. That evening, Braasch was brought to the office to sign his confession. He asked for counsel to advise him as to whether he should sign it, but his request was denied. He gave in and signed.

It is here that the first complication arises. Much later in the tortuous journey of the case through the courts, court-appointed attorneys for Braasch and Sullivan were to charge that the confessions were obtained involuntarily because request for counsel in the jail had been denied. A federal judge was to describe these confessions as the product of two uneducated, destitute, inexperienced boys having been "tricked by police into making incriminating admissions . . . when their written

statements were taken." On the other hand, Las Vegas police and Utah police, who assisted in the interrogations, swear that they told the boys they were not required to sign the statements, and the Utah supreme court has held that the absence of counsel in the Las Vegas jail did not prejudice the case against the defendants. But even the supreme court conceded:

Had Sullivan kept his secret these boys may never have been suspected of the crime. For it occurred while Beaver was full of strangers there for deer hunting so their presence at the time would not arouse suspicion. But with the confessions to focus the attention of the investigating officers on them, the resulting evidence was probably sufficient to convict them without using the confessions and with the confessions the case against them is so strong that there can be little possible doubt of their guilt. Had they consulted counsel before answering any questions, maybe they would not have confessed for as stated by Mr. Justice Jackson in *Watts v. State of Indiana*. . . . "Any lawyer worth his salt will tell the suspect in no uncertain terms to make no statements to police under any circumstances."

The boys waived extradition proceedings, and the next day they were taken from Las Vegas to Utah, where first-degree murder charges were filed against them. At a preliminary hearing, they asked for a lawyer and were told, "A justice of the peace doesn't have authority to appoint counsel for you. You will have a chance to have counsel in the [state] district court." Braasch persisted and was told that he could have a lawyer if he could pay for one. Braasch thought it over for a few minutes and then said, "Well, then we might as well get it over with." After the hearing, they were taken to the service station where they re-enacted the crime for the prosecution, surrounded by a threatening crowd of townspeople, many of whom were carrying guns in preparation for deer hunting. When the defendants were arraigned, a few days later, they pleaded not guilty—still without counsel to advise them. The arraigning judge neglected to tell them that, under a Utah statute, by entering a plea they thereby waived all and any errors and irregularities in the prior proceedings.

When the trial began in Beaver, the court appointed two lawyers

from Cedar City to represent the prisoners. The attorneys immediately requested a change of venue, pleading that in view of the victim's popularity and the brutality of the crime a fair trial was impossible in Beaver. The judge at first refused but relented a week later and moved the trial to the neighboring town of Parowan (population 1,455). When the prosecution introduced the confessions signed in the Las Vegas jail, the defense questioned whether they had been obtained properly and voluntarily. The judge reserved judgment until the next day, when he admitted the statements in evidence. On the third day of the trial, after deliberating for two hours and fifty minutes, the jury found the defendants guilty of murder in the first degree, with no recommendation of leniency. Braasch and Sullivan were sentenced to die. They chose the firing squad.

TWO hotly disputed issues were involved in the trial. First, there is reason to believe that Braasch and Sullivan were not vigorously represented by their Cedar City attorneys. The lawyers were understandably reluctant to take the case of two such unsympathetic defendants in the inflamed atmosphere prevailing in southern Utah; one wrote Sullivan's mother a few weeks before the trial saying that he lacked experience (he had had twenty months of practice) and strongly urging her to get her son "an attorney who is a criminal specialist." Second, an opinion written by Judge Willis Ritter of the federal district court notes that the change of venue from Beaver to Parowan was only one of a host of errors in the handling of the case by the lower state courts. The two towns, about fifty miles apart, are situated in a valley settled years ago by Mormon pioneers, many of whom were polygamists. Today, close community and family ties exist between the two towns. As Judge Ritter put it in his opinion: "It should have been unthinkable under the circumstances of this case to hold the trial at either Beaver or Parowan." However, Judge Ritter stands alone—the state courts and the federal court of appeals disagree with him, and the Supreme Court has refused to review.

Shortly after the defendants were sentenced, Sullivan's mother came to Utah to ask the governor's help in

seeing that her son was vigorously represented in an appeal. The governor recommended A. Wally Sandack, a prominent Salt Lake attorney, and he was appointed by the court. Two days before the condemned men were to face the firing squad, Sandack and the Cedar City attorneys succeeded in postponing the execution by appealing the case to the state supreme court. When the court handed down its decision, the judges conceded that errors had been committed in the pre-trial proceedings, and that the state *should* have provided Braasch and Sullivan with counsel at the preliminary hearing. Nevertheless, the court unanimously upheld the death sentence. The court's reasoning was this: first, it held that each defendant was fully informed of his rights in the Las Vegas jail, and therefore the confessions were voluntarily obtained. Second, since the confessions were valid evidence, the failure of the judge to provide the defendants with counsel at the preliminary hearing did not constitute a prejudicial error; after all, the boys *had* confessed in Las Vegas and there was no showing that an attorney at the hearing would have aided their cause. The possibility that an attorney might have been able to lay the foundation for a sentence of life imprisonment, rather than death, did not commend itself to the court.

Perhaps the most disturbing part of the decision was contained in a concurring opinion written by a new member of the court who, as a state district judge, had conducted the proceedings when Braasch and Sullivan were arraigned. Rather than disqualifying himself, he agreed with the majority that the accused should have been clearly informed of the state's duty to provide counsel to indigent defendants *before* they decided whether they were ready for preliminary hearings; he conceded that the defendants had asked for an attorney and did not get one. But, he continued:

. . . . When they were told they could have one but had to pay for it, they said no more about the matter and apparently acquiesced in going forward without the benefit of counsel. Whether they actually waived their rights to counsel or not may have been open to dispute. If not, it was in violation of their right to proceed without providing them with an attorney. Be that as it may, it is not every error that is

The NATION

prejudicial and this can be so no matter how vital the right in question may be. There should be no reversal of the case merely because the law enforcement officers and the justice of the peace may not have done just exactly as the law prescribes. . .

The contrast between this brand of legal reasoning and that expressed by Justice Frankfurter in the Sacher case is striking:

.... In the development of our liberty insistence upon procedural regularity has been a large factor. . . . It is not for nothing that most of the provisions of our Bill of Rights are concerned with matters of procedure. . . . Time out of mind this Court has reversed conviction for the most heinous offenses, even though no doubt about the guilt of the defendant was entertained. It reversed because the mode by which guilt was established disregarded those standards of procedure which are so precious and so important to our society.

The history of the case after it left the state supreme court is at once depressing and encouraging to anyone concerned about the erosion of our constitutional rights that has beset the country in recent years. On the one hand, it is discouraging to learn that the courts disagree as to whether or not a person accused of a capital crime is entitled to counsel at every stage—something most laymen would take for granted. For, as one student of the criminal courts has pointed out:

Those who think of the accused as one at an unfair disadvantage with all the powers of the state arrayed against him . . . think of that half-concealed, unsupervised procedure which precedes the appearance of the accused in the court of record. Here it is that we find the third degree, the bail-bond broker, the stool pigeon, the crooked interpreter, the shyster lawyer, the lame-duck magistrate, and all the rest of the motley of underworld characters and methods. The poor man . . . often is the victim of a grotesque burlesque on the administration of justice.

Conversely, it is encouraging to note that once the legal battle to save Braasch and Sullivan began, it is unlikely that they could have obtained more ingenious or industrious counsel even if they had been able to pay for them: their attorneys carried the case four times to the Utah Supreme Court, twice to the state's board of pardons, three times

to the United States Supreme Court, and twice to the federal district court of Utah. As a result, Braasch and Sullivan's lives have been extended by six years.

The case first came before the federal district court early in 1952, when Braasch and Sullivan's attorneys asked Judge Ritter to stay the execution scheduled for February 26, and order a new trial. (This was the third execution date set. After the state supreme court had rejected their appeal for the second time, they had been saved by a last-minute reprieve granted by Governor J. Bracken Lee to enable them to ask the board of pardons to commute their sentence to life imprisonment.) Because the peculiarities of the case required extensive study, Judge Ritter granted a forty-five-day postponement. His action met with strong public resentment, especially in southwestern Utah.

IN VIEW of the murky constitutional issues involved, Judge Ritter appointed as *amicus curiae* the professors of constitutional and criminal law at the state university, asking them to analyze the records of the case. The constitutional lawyer concluded that the defendants were adequately represented in the trial and that any appeal based on constitutional grounds was certain to be rejected. The criminal lawyer concluded that the absence of counsel before the trial was not a prejudicial error.

Judge Ritter's decision sharply disagreed:

The time a defendant needs counsel most is immediately after his arrest and until trial. No better case than the one at bar could be found to illustrate this proposition. . . .

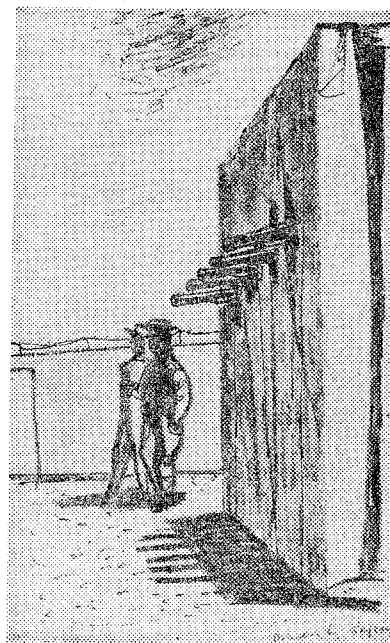
[But] counsel was not appointed for them until after they had been arraigned and had entered their pleas of not guilty. By that time the evidence was all neatly tied up for delivery at the trial. All of it was obtained from the mouths of immature defendants, while they were crying out for counsel and being denied. One cannot escape the conclusion that even boys could not be so persuaded unless there had been held out to them some hope that they would be mercifully dealt with. There is evidence in the record of that. One cannot escape the conviction that they were not advised of their constitutional rights and therefore had no intelligent notion of what they were doing. There is evidence in the record of that. . . . It

is hard for me to see how this procedure satisfies the canons of decency and fairness which express the notions of justice of all English-speaking peoples.

In the end, Ritter sent the case back to the state supreme court, but retained jurisdiction over the defendants.

Finally, after the case had traveled from court to court for nineteen months, it was again before Judge Ritter. Ritter, in a decision which bristled with criticisms of Utah's state courts and law enforcement authorities, granted Braasch and Sullivan a writ of habeas corpus. The State of Utah appealed his decision to the federal court of appeals, and again Ritter found himself without allies. The higher federal court, confronted with the uncomfortable possibility that if it upheld Ritter the convicted men might go free, reversed his decision. In February of this year, the United States Supreme Court rejected a final desperate appeal. (On one of the previous occasions when the case was before the highest court, Justices Black and Douglas had favored reviewing it.)

Braasch and Sullivan have just been given their fourth appointment to meet the firing squad. Unless the governor issues a reprieve, or the board of pardons—which meets April 25—can be persuaded that commutation to life imprisonment would be a humane act, there will be two new notches on the old chair in the death house on May 11.



Drawing by Refregier

April 14, 1956

Appeasement in South Africa

By Julius Lewin

Johannesburg
THE JEWS in South Africa are prosperous but nervous. They are afraid of the ruling race, the Afrikaners. They recently produced a large volume, *The Jews in South Africa: a History*, edited by Gustav Saron and Louis Hotz, designed to show Afrikaners how much the Jewish community has contributed to the prosperity of its adopted country and how friendly the relations between the two races had always been. (Well, not quite always. When Hitler was at the zenith of his power, some of the present Nationalist leaders—notably Eric Louw, the present finance and foreign minister, who was then in opposition—indulged in open anti-Semitism. The new *History* tactfully gives only a couple of pages to that significant period in Nationalist politics.) Yet the book has failed to please the two leading Nationalist dailies, which published reviews disturbing to more people than the authors.

The reception given the book was part of a policy. The Nationalists behind the present government are determined to keep the Jewish community neutral in South African politics and the Jews as a whole have not been unwilling to accept the role. For one thing, they nearly all enjoy a degree of financial success undreamed of in other countries; for another, Mr. Strijdom's government, like Dr. Malan's before it, has displayed a cordial attitude toward Israel and has given South African Jews (who are second only to American Jews in their zeal for Israel's cause) every possible facility to export money and goods to that small country. As if to seal this strange inter-racial harmony, the minister of justice appointed Mr. Simon Kuper, the president of the South African Zionist Federation, to the Transvaal bench. This shrewd appointment came last year at a time when most people were saying that no Jewish lawyer, however eminent,

would reach the bench by nomination of the Strijdom regime.

Yet the nasty taste left by the two book reviews was no illusion. Only a few months earlier, one of the same newspapers had suggested that South African Jewish organizations should try to restrain the Israeli delegation to the U. N. from condemning South Africa by its vote on certain resolutions. In plain words, the Afrikaner attitude is a species of political blackmail. If Jews will refrain from any kind of effective criticism of the Nationalists, then the Nationalists will not discriminate against Jews, who are, after all, counted among the white folks.

IT IS not only the Jews who have been tempted to appease Mr. Strijdom. Ever since the United Party lost the general election three years ago, the British business men who lead it have made a habit of adjusting themselves to life under the Nationalists. Harry Oppenheimer, M. P., one of the central pillars of the gigantic Anglo-American (mining and finance) Corporation, led the way by promptly terminating the activities of his foundation, an organization designed "to save democracy" in the Union. This source of funds was suddenly denied to the party and its allied organizations, which, as a result, came near to bankruptcy. Under its present spineless leadership, the United Party will never recover the vigor it temporarily showed before the last election; nor is its leadership challenged.

The English press in South Africa, controlled by the wealthy mine owners, reflects the same attitude of "don't-be-nasty-to-the-Nationalists." Circulation managers have a special reason to justify their policy. They discovered that the Afrikaners, who already form nearly 60 per cent of the white population, are the customers who count most in the eyes of advertisers. Afrikaners prefer the English dailies because of their brighter features; the Afrikaans papers are subject to the influence of the Dutch Reformed Church, which disapproves of subjects like sex unless veiled to the point of no circulation returns. But to their Afrikaner

readers, English papers must be careful not to offend popular prejudices—particularly political ones.

The English press has yet another reason for a policy of appeasement. The Nationalists are determined to curb the power of the press which, even in its current self-censored form, they regard as one of the few remaining obstacles to the desired coordination of public opinion throughout the country. The press commission, now preparing the way for a new law, has privately cross-examined all the English editors; it has amassed a mountain of evidence to prove how hostile English newspapers are to this benevolent government, how ignorant they are of Afrikaner culture and how wickedly garbled are the stories sent from their editorial offices to papers abroad. No journalist seriously doubts that in the next year or two there will be a new press law important enough to be headlined.

Not that the press is free from legal restraints today. "Editing a newspaper in South Africa," Horace Flather, editor of the *Johannesburg Star*, the leading conservative daily, told the International Press Institute, "is like walking blind-fold through a mine field." He was thinking of the laws against the publication of anything remotely likely to encourage "communism," or the creation of "ill-feeling" between the races. So apprehensive are editors today that they would rather avert their gaze from a first-class news story than run the (often imaginary) risk of publishing it. Such a story broke last year when 6,000 Africans, overcoming all obstacles, gathered from all parts of the country in the *veld* near Johannesburg at a "congress of the people." This unique conference, attended by people of all races, adopted a dramatic "freedom charter" expressing their demand not only for elementary human rights but for a more equal distribution of wealth, including land. No doubt the pen that drafted the charter was inspired by literature of a type banned in South Africa, a surmise confirmed by messages of good will to the congress from well-known Socialists abroad. Not one per cent of white South Africans heard of the charter because it was hardly mentioned in their newspapers. Only one Nationalist daily commented on its significance.

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In South Africa today "communism" can mean not only any form of socialism, but also of liberalism. Since cabinet ministers do not draw a clear distinction among the three creeds, it is no wonder that their simpler-minded followers lump them together as the hydra-headed monster threatening Christendom. Accordingly, journalists find it easier to keep all radical thoughts out of print. Said one: "If Christ came down to earth again and started preaching, we would not print the story. If you asked the editor why not, he would reply that Christian doctrines were dangerous and that

the story was not news, anyhow, because the Man had been here before."

Steadily the Nationalists pursue their own purpose. Now that the voters' roll has been "purified" of all colored elements, the ruling party can be completely confident of winning the next election, due in 1958, by a bigger majority than the last. They can then proceed to declare a Republic; whether it will be within or outside the British Commonwealth hardly matters. White people opposed to the government have lost heart and their morale has never been lower. As for black or brown

people, harsh laws, tightened year by year, are applied so stringently that the African National Congress and its sister organizations have been crippled. Everything, in fact, is now under control—except the aims and aspirations of ten million people.

A few months after the Nationalists first took office, *The Nation* (November 6, 1948) carried an article entitled, Will South Africa go Fascist? Today there is much less doubt than there was then about the answer. The country is unlikely to behave like Nazi Germany did, but its resemblance to Franco's Spain will assuredly grow.

Elsa Maxwell Loves Mazola

Alberti's Great Discovery . . by Walter Goodman

JULES ALBERTI is president and owner of Endorsements, Inc. He produces absolutely nothing. As was said of Willy Loman, "He don't put a bolt to a nut, he don't tell you the law or give you medicines." The difference between Willy Loman and Jules Alberti, however, is that Jules is unable to carry his samples in a valise, has just moved to a grand new office on Park Avenue and 55th Street in New York grossed around \$850,000 last year and seems to be in excellent spirits. Also, he is very well liked.

And yet fifty-three-year-old Jules—slight, bespectacled and so polite ("It'll be my pleasure, my *honor* to talk to you")—is a salesman, too, in his unlikely way. He sells people—"the people you want"—to advertisers. For Jules is king of The Testimonial, an institution on which the men of Madison Avenue have spent an estimated \$500,000,000 over the past ten years. Jules, who claims the distinction of being the only fellow in America engaged exclusively in this line of work, figures that he had his finger in about half that enormous pie.

A former saxophone player, band

WALTER GOODMAN, a New York advertising man, is a frequent contributor to *The Nation*.

April 14, 1956

leader and manager of vocalist Benay Venuta, Jules began to hit his stride as a manipulator of Names in the forties when the Treasury Department titled him Coordinator of Celebrities and Talent for its War Finance Division. His wartime connections with the great inspired him and a lady named Hazel McCabe to set up Endorsements, Inc. in 1945. Ends never quite met during the first year, but in 1946 Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn came through with a request to Jules to round up some Schaefer beer enthusiasts. The name-procurers made \$6,600 that year: in 1947 billings came to \$11,800; in 1948, \$67,000. Since 1949, Endorsements, Inc. has been in the six-figure bracket.

JULES woos customers by promising to "get the people you want, speedily, through our exclusive, intimate contacts with the great." He is, in fact, a dual middleman—first between the advertiser and the endorser, and then between the endorser and the consumer. In his daily operations, he is a parody of Mr. Riesman's "other-directed man." He gets people to like him so that they will say publicly that they like a certain product so that people who like them will maybe develop a liking for the product too.

For all his prominence in his profession, however, Jules lays no claim to having invented anything. He is the expeditor and the reformer, not the innovator.

A hundred years ago or so, common gravestones were providing endorsers in abundance who never objected to having themselves quoted in praise of some life-giving nostrum. In 1889, The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher made common cause with Lillie Langtry and three other maidens in hailing the happy properties of Fears' Soap. A possibly apocryphal story has it that early in this century, one stage beauty wrote the following open letter: "Dear Mrs. Pinkham, I have taken three bottles of your Lydia Pinkham compound and feel like a new man." As advertising boomed in the twenties and thirties, so did testimonial-giving. Silent-film star Constance Talmadge established a record for the course when, in the interests of her latest movie, she juxtaposed her charms to some 400 products, ranging from an aspirin tablet to a grand piano, in one brief day. As she was in a hurry to go to Europe, she didn't find out exactly what she had plugged until a rash of ads appeared in *Liberty* several weeks later.

Constance may just have been an energetic consumer, but every now



and then one of her fellow testifiers, by a burst of candor or slip of tongue, has given skeptics grist for their nasty mills. Lady Diana Manners, for instance, after having joined the highly placed ranks of Pond's face-cream endorsers (two Queens, a battalion of Princesses and several regiments of society women), told newspaper reporters that her beauty was attributable to "fresh air, exercise and plenty of soap and water." Then there was Princess Maryanna Mayorskaya ("Mindful of the inherent responsibilities of royalty in shaping the ideas of bourgeoisie, I am careful never to be seen in public without a Borzoi book") who turned out to be a small, non-titled man. And how can one forget C. K. "Red" Cagle, the celebrated West Point football player of a generation or so back, who always used a Royal portable typewriter? "It is the greatest aid I ever knew in keeping up my grades," swore Red. Upon investigation, it was discovered that in a class of 266, the Royal portable user was 232nd in math, 207th in English and 239th in history.

It was into a compromised world, then, that Jules Alberti leaped after the war, determined to bring *believability* back onto the billboards. "It cannot be emphasized too much or too often," expounds the slick-paper *Revised Primer of Testimonial Advertising*, put out by Endorsements, Inc., "that testimonials are *only effective when believable and only believable when*: 1. The testimonial is true. 2. The personality and product are logically connected. 3. The testimonial copy is simple, sincere and honest."

How does Jules meet these requirements? Well, he has a "research" staff which keeps tabs on the doings of celebrities; dossiers on some 7,000 more or less famous persons are now held at Endorsement, Inc.'s offices. When an advertising agency calls on

Jules, he immediately sends samples of the product to be plugged to potential and *believable* pluggers. A month or so later, he asks the recipient notables if they can "sincerely endorse the products" they've been asked to try out. One or more is likely to respond in the affirmative, their sincerity having presumably been whetted by the offer of \$1,000, a large quantity of whatever they are prepared to enthuse over (Elsa Maxwell, Cobina Wright and Gracie Allen got a year's supply of Mazola oil) and gobs of free publicity.

OF COURSE Jules is very careful about selecting his notables. He's been quoted as advising a group of advertising executives to "examine your self and explore your soul." He elucidated: "I'm critical of the endorsement that has obviously been bought and paid for without any attempt to disguise the fact." What does this mean exactly? It means: "Don't show Marilyn Monroe waxing her own car. People won't believe it."

Guided by such high principles, Jules has given Joe DiMaggio an opportunity to tell America which breakfast cereal, after-shave lotion, cigarette lighter and other manly items he goes for. Jules also amassed a bushel of actresses who sigh over a shampoo, athletes who exult in a chewing gum and—after a long, hot search—ten Southern farmers who live on a laxative. He allowed Mrs. Errol Flynn, Mrs. Lex Barker and Mrs. Walter Wanger to voice their inner longing at last: "I love to see a man smoke a Cigarillo." (The Flynn's and Barkers were divorced shortly after the appearance of the ad, and Mr. Wanger took a shot at a man whom he accused of paying undue attentions to Mrs. Wanger. Just who was smoking the Cigarillo during all of this is not clear.) He found an actor who drinks Blatz

beer, a tennis player who dotes on Lucky Lager and a violin maker who keeps a can of Falstaff close by his cat gut.

In all his labors, one is continually reminded, Jules seeks *believability*. Marlene Dietrich's picture appears in a magazine spread for Amm-i-dent ammoniated toothpaste. But her name isn't mentioned. No quote as to Amm-i-dent's efficacy and tastiness comes from her sealed lips. (Not a single glistening tooth is visible.) *Believability*? Why, what is there for the reader to believe or disbelieve? There's Marlene and there's a tube of Amm-i-dent. Jules bears no responsibility for what the reader adduces.

The campaign of which Jules is most proud is the one he pulled off for Cyma watches. A series of ads for this relatively minor-brand time-piece has over the past few years featured General MacArthur, Mrs. Roosevelt, J. Edgar Hoover, Robert Oppenheimer, Warren Austin, Carlos P. Romulo, Leopold Stokowski, Cecil B. DeMille, Helen Keller and good old testifying Joe DiMaggio. Does every one of these eminent folk keep their momentous appointments by a Cyma? Sorry, no way of telling, since all any of them did was to accept an award from the company. Under the headlines, "World Famous for Distinguished Service," each layout puts forth a picture of the given personage, then—a little ways down the column—suggests: "For those you would honor with pride there is nothing finer than a Cyma watch." *Believability*? One may believe in General MacArthur or not, but any connection between the General and Cyma watches is purely the doing of Jules and Irving Berk, Cyma's ad man. Jules reports that the series "paid off handsomely."

Why do testimonials pay off—"skeptics and cynics to the contrary" as Jules puts it? The identification of acned teen-agers and frustrated matrons with Grace Kelly? Young America's adulation for Joe DiMaggio? Mature America's regard for Helen Keller? Are these feelings somehow being distorted when they are put to the service of soaps, watches and breakfast cereals? But this again is not within the ethical purview of Jules Alberti. His one solid axiom is the need to sell, and all his major propositions follow.

What exactly is one to believe

The NATION

from the Cyma campaign? Is there some difference between the original concept of an endorsement and the endorsement paid for in advance? And what of the coincidence of a movie star publicly declaring her affection for a cigarette just as her latest hit reaches town? But Jules's ethical system, which starts with the need to sell, stops at these nice questions.

"Never, never break the rule that calls for *true and believable* testimonials," Jules soberly cautions advertisers. "It is unfortunately a fact that too many people have too little faith in advertising. For this reason, if for no other, considerations of credibility in advertising are of the greatest importance to us all." Why, what other reason could there be

for telling the truth? In contrast to his all-encompassing impartiality when it comes to beer, Jules Alberti's notion of truth is limited severely to the precise words on a page. But, alas, advertising does not live by words alone.

THE DAYS of the patently phoney testimonial, of "the endorsement that has been bought and paid for without any attempt to disguise the fact," are over, thanks to the codes of the FTC, the Better Business Bureau, Jules Alberti and common sense. As the world becomes a more sophisticated place, the techniques of advertising are continually being refined by sophisticated men like Jules, but somehow, despite the very latest appurtenances of sincere public

relations, like charcoal-gray suits and narrow brims and large sentiments, the good old huckster spirit lingers.

Twenty-five years ago, when Constance Talmadge was smiling indiscriminately on all free enterprise, Alva Johnston wrote: "It has become an unwritten law with the better testimonial houses to avoid obvious mendacity, when artfully arranged truth works just as well. . . . The ideal endorsement technique today is to make no false statements. The golden rule is never to fool the public; let it fool itself."

So the new *believable* look in testimonials is not so very new after all, and the reforming proclivities of Endorsements, Inc. notwithstanding, it still looks like a case of *caveat emptor*.

A TOUCH OF FASCISM

And a Dose of Anti- . . . by J. A. del Vayo

UNTIL VERY recently talk about fascism, except from a strictly historical point of view, had gone out of style. Those who still persisted in considering it a living issue were thought to be obsessed, either by personal experiences or memories of an evil past. Lately the pendulum seems to be swinging to the other extreme. Here, for example, one finds a tendency to paint into too vivid colors the menace of the Poujadistes in France.

There has, of course, been a fascist revival in several European countries. It preceded by several years the spectacular success of the Poujade movement in the last French general elections. This revival was an inevitable by-product of the cold war. From the moment that the enemies of yesterday became the new allies and the allies of yesterday the new enemies, the fascist elements which had sought cover when the Axis powers went down to defeat began to emerge. Their sense of security has mounted with every new bit of evidence that denazification has been abandoned—almost forgotten—by Western powers and German

authorities alike; that the direction of several powerful newspapers in Italy has fallen again into the hands of prominent former henchmen of Mussolini; that Franco has become the idol of Washington; and that in France an upstart movement to resist the government's tax policy has gained fifty-two seats in the National Assembly and developed such well-known fascist stigmata as extreme chauvinism and open anti-Semitism.

By 1950 the fascists had not only become relatively respectable but had reestablished their contacts from country to country. As is quite natural one of their most active international centers is Madrid. There, in the last months of the war, had gathered many Nazis who succeeded in escaping from Germany, many French and Belgian collaborationists who fled into Spain while the Allied armies were beating the Germans in the south of France, in addition to those naturalized Spaniards, former members of the S. S. and the Gestapo, who from the beginning of the Spanish war had served as advisers of Franco's "*servicios de orden*." In Spain they not only enjoyed official protection but could make use of

funds which had been deposited in Latin America, Spain, Switzerland and other countries where there was no possibility of Allied investigation—if the Allies had intended anything of the sort.

Originally Poujadism probably had nothing to do with this revival of fascism. There is no evidence that when "*le petit Poujade*" launched his crusade against the tax collectors he was part of an international or even a national fascist conspiracy. He was certainly not the first to capitalize on the readiness of the small businessman or farmer to believe the government was stealing his money for its own dubious purposes.

Official reports of successive French parliaments reveal many debates in which deputies of various tendencies tried to enhance their popularity in their own districts by shouting against the "*fisc*." But on the other hand Poujadism was not merely speeches against taxes. It was rowdiness and a defiance of all civil authority. As such it could never have won 2,600,000 votes and more than fifty deputies had there not been enough fascist virus in the air to spread the demagoguery of a ruthless

April 14, 1956

297

agitation against democratic and republican institutions. In the early postwar years, while the Resistance forces still dominated the government, no Poujade would have dared to call the National Assembly "the biggest brothel in Paris."

From considering Poujadism a passing fancy and laughing at its leader, some of his adversaries since his electoral success have gone to the other extreme of exaggerating the power of the man and his movement. I recently heard an experienced parliamentarian predict that if new elections were now held the Poujadists would double or triple their representation. This estimate ignores several basic factors. In the last elections two parties made striking gains: the Poujadists and the Communists. A poll taken today would probably show a further advance by the Communists, rather than the Poujadists. The latter have recently committed two serious mistakes: first, to go all-out for war in Algeria and no compromise with the Nationalists—a most unpopular attitude; and second, to behave so outrageously in the National Assembly, especially during the discussion of the validity of certain contested Poujadist seats, as to irritate even the other rightist groups.

OF COURSE it must not be overlooked that Poujade and his lieutenants hope to win the army of North Africa for their cause. They think that if they can exploit the frustration of the soldiers who are sent to fight there, especially in the event France is forced to abandon Algeria, they will win the allegiance of many thousands of young people who are accustomed to killing Arabs and equally ready for a fight at home against the French Left. The danger is real. It was the veterans' organizations of Algeria that forced Premier Guy Mollet to drop General Catroux, who had accepted the post of Minister-Resident in the hope of saving the situation for France through moderate—very moderate—concessions.

In addition to this effort to win the veterans, the Poujadists are now courting people with big money. Here also they recall the beginnings of nazism. Like Poujade, Hitler started by appealing to the frustrated veterans of the lost war; then to the "little man"—the lower middle-class



Pierre Poujade

shopkeeper or clerk. But in the end he had at his disposal the millions of Thyssen and Krupp and the other Ruhr potentates. Some informed people here say that Poujadist party funds have been enlarged by contributions from Algerian settlers. But so far there is no way of knowing what their prospects may be of winning big-money support.

The lack of a positive program is often cited by opponents as assurance that the Poujade movement will blow up. This is a risky assumption. It was Mussolini himself who said, "Fascism had no program but it produced action. During the first two years we were not a party, but an anti-party." Poujadism is similarly "anti." It counts on a deterioration of the whole situation in France—on a failure in Algeria, on further devaluation of the franc, on political crisis—to rally every embittered, disillusioned Frenchman. In sum, Poujadism is today not a powerful force, an immediate menace, but circumstances might easily favor its growth.

IN ITALY the ferocious campaign carried on in Parliament by the neo-fascist party, M. S. I., supported by the monarchist party, P. N. M., against the Segni cabinet and through it against President Gronchi, is merely the external expression of a revised fascism, still modest but increasing in influence. It can claim the name of "neo-fascist" because its promoters learned a lesson from the Mussolini era and are using tactics more in accordance with present reality. Because Poujadism is now in

style, some publicity has been given to "Italy's own Poujade," Raffaele Garbin, a forty-year-old Milan importer who, like his model in France, has begun by styling himself "strictly non-political." He is the author of a "technical plan" to rescue the government—and the taxpayer—from the "Italian fiscal jungle." But imitators of Poujade are now to be found everywhere. Even in England newspapers recently recorded a "Poujade press conference," at which Sir Bernard Rucker, the head of the Daimler company and one of Britain's most eccentric industrialists, blasted the tyranny of taxes and the "bureaucracy of the semi-socialized state." "It is after all our money," he said, demanding cuts in official spending. "Governments have no money of their own." There may be another Poujadist movement soon in Germany. Otto Strasser, once a Hitler intimate and later his self-appointed rival, plans to meet M. Poujade in Paris and exchange ideas. He could also give lessons in fascist tactics to "little Pierre." But both in Italy and Germany it is the revival of the old fascism that must be carefully watched, though without exaggerating its immediate threat.

IN Germany every day brings new instances of Nazi infiltration. There has been penetration of the cadres of the new army. And there is the case of the "Globke scandal." Hans Globke is author of a book on the Hitlerite racial laws which has practically disappeared from circulation. However, certain liberal and Socialist columnists found copies. In the Frankfurt *Rundschau*, Peter Miska reminded the Germans that, after all, "six million human beings were killed in the gas chambers and that the laws commented on and praised by Herr Globke provided the basis for this whole mass-murder." At this moment Globke still holds the post of a state secretary in the Federal Chancellery and is regarded as a man who enjoys the personal confidence of Dr. Adenauer. But Hans Globke is not the only one. Some of the groups demanding his removal have listed other tainted names: Edmond Forschbach, chief of the government press service; General Heusinger, representative of West Germany in NATO; Theodor Oberlander, Minister for Refugees,

The Nation

and other high officials of the Adenauer administration.

The existence of a new fascism in Europe can therefore not be denied. But there is also a conscious opposition movement worthy of being reported. In analysing this aspect of the problem the most significant development is the determination of the anti-fascists not to repeat the passivity and resignation which in the twenties permitted the partisans of Mussolini and of Hitler to overwhelm the democratic forces in Italy and Germany.

From the avalanche of reports and rumors from Moscow that have followed the sensational attack in the recent Communist Party Congress on Stalin and the "cult" of personal leadership, one item has emerged with particular meaning for the problem here under discussion: the present Russian leaders have clearly decided to try at all costs to establish new Popular Fronts in Europe and elsewhere. This decision is already being translated into action.

With incomparable zeal the Communists are appealing to other Left and liberal elements to end the internal cold war and accept a program of ideological coexistence. What this means to the Poujadists and other neo-fascist groups is plain enough.

Many anti-fascists who are neither Communists nor Socialists are also opposing the Poujadist propaganda with great vigor. When on March 6 Poujade dispatched ten of his deputies to a rally in Toulouse, they were met by thousands of workers, civil-service employees and students who obliged them to give up the rally and flee the town. The League of the Rights of Man and the *Mouvement contre le racisme* are participating actively in the anti-fascist drive. I attended a big rally at the Mutualité in Paris, addressed by representatives of the League, the "*Nouvelle République*," the "New Left" and the *Mouvement*. The anti-Semitic character of the Poujade agitation was particularly stressed. Poujade has denied he is anti-

Semitic. But the other day in the rue de Rivoli, I saw written on the walls the slogan, "Jews go home!" And at the Poujadist open-air rally in the Etoile cries of "Death to the Jews" were heard.

We may be only at the beginning or we may also be at the beginning of the end. Many sharp analysts of French political life are convinced that either there will never be a showdown between the opposing forces we have described here or, in case of a real crisis, some one will be found to act as arbiter and prevent anything approaching civil war. A while ago one heard the name of Mendes-France mentioned for such a role. Today some people think of de Gaulle.

In any case fascism and anti-fascism are again becoming a European reality and may influence the future of European politics much more than is believed by those who have assumed that the terrible licking taken by Hitler and Mussolini disposed of that issue forever.

NEW ORTHODOXY FOR OLD

Shackled Soviet Historians . . . by Peter Geyl

Utrecht, Holland

ASIDE FROM Khrushchev's notable address to a closed session, perhaps the most sensational speech delivered at the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party was that of First Deputy Prime Minister Anastas I. Mikoyan. While criticism of Stalin and Stalinism was the keynote of the entire congress, the contribution of this veteran collaborator of the late dictator was especially significant. Among the charges he hurled at the Stalin regime was that it had stifled research, especially the writing of history.

PETER GEYL, one of the most noted of contemporary historians and author of an oft-quoted critique of Toynbee, is professor of modern history at the University of Utrecht. His latest books are *Debates With Historians* and *Use and Abuse of History*.

Shall we congratulate the Soviet historian? Is freedom dawning at last? What must give us pause is the reflection that, after all, these sudden reversals of the party line are nothing new: freedom has never benefited by them, for they are meant merely to substitute one orthodoxy for another.

Personally, I was reminded of my recent experience at the International Historical Congress in Rome last December. There were a number of Russian historians there, flanked by colleagues from the satellite countries. Stalin had been dead for two and a half years. Did these men give any evidence of having had their minds freed from the shackles which had bound them for so long? Not a bit. They did their best to be courteous, but they did not deign—or rather they were unable—to enter into the "argument without end" which history is to us of the West.

They came not to debate, but to tell us, for they are certain that they have a monopoly on true historical method and insight as revealed for all time by Marx and Engels. They regard the materialistic conception of history as the indispensable condition for historical science. It is a part of their doctrine not only that history is governed by the development of the means of production and is essentially the history of the class struggle, but that its direction is determined toward a society which will be purely "democratic" and classless.

When I speak of *them* in the aggregate, I only echo their own constantly referring to us: "We Soviet historians"; "the school to which I belong, the Marxist"; and so on. In the West all their theses are subject to debate; behind the iron curtain they have become law. A. L. Sidorov confidently assured the congress that the Marxist materialistic

conception of history "is universally accepted by Soviet historians of the older as well as of the younger generation." In Western minds the spectacle of this well-drilled array of historians, all trotting obediently through the same curious processes of thought, all resolutely pretending to master the refractory material of mankind's historical vicissitudes by the same formulas, raises questions to which no satisfactory answer will ever be forthcoming from those fluent adepts of historical materialism and its special kind of dialectics.

HOW much compulsion has been needed to achieve this state of affairs? Are there any Soviet historians left who, in the privacy of their study, think differently? Are there any younger men trying to widen their outlook by surreptitiously scanning the writing of unorthodox ("reactionary," "bourgeois") Western historians? Do not doubts stir in the hearts of even some of these speakers—doubts which perhaps they hardly dare to confess to themselves? And for all the bold assertions in which they indulge, does the future really belong to them? Will their "history" really become everybody's history? Have they discovered the means by which to shackle once and for all the human mind which, as Burckhardt said (a reactionary bourgeois, if you like, but somewhat more than that!) is "a worrier" (*ein Wuehler*)?

Well, I have heard some of them, and I have read some of their writings. One morning in Rome Soviet historical literature was distributed. I carried off eight Russian pamphlets on various subjects with translations in one of the West European languages. Here Soviet historiography showed its fruits to the West and it was a pitiable exhibition. How frightful is the superficiality and at times downright falsification brought forth by that dogmatism, that wilful one-sidedness, that parrot-like repetition of catch-phrases!

Let me give one instance. A. D. Nikonov discusses *The Origin of World War II*. He begins (as they all do) with a grandiloquent proclamation of theory. The origins of wars can only be ascertained correctly and scientifically (how fond they all are of that word "scientific"!) by a veracious analysis of concrete historical facts. Fine! But we are warned beforehand that to adduce

in explanation man's biological and psychic makeup is "anti-scientific." To lay the blame on rulers and conquerors, too, is an outmoded approach. Chance is ruled out; to admit it into the picture would amount to rejecting history as a science. "Modern progressive historical science, and Soviet historiography particularly, proceeds from the fact that every war is the result of preceding economic and political development, the result of the home and foreign policy of the respective classes and states."

Few Western historians will bank on any one of the factors thus pontifically condemned. But in the plural causal explanation at which modern historical thinking generally arrives, each of these factors is likely to be present, including, no doubt, the one declared to be all-sufficient and exclusively scientific by the spokesman for Soviet scholarship. Factors of a spiritual or ideological nature will still further complicate the picture, and to strike a balance between such widely different elements is indeed the historian's insuperable difficulty. This need not lead him to describe history as "unknowable" (to this unscientific and unprogressive conclusion, according to Mme. Pankratova, arrived the authors of the 1946 Report of the American Social Science Research Council), but he will admit that in the final, comprehensive judgment there must be a quantum of arbitrariness. Does not this modesty denote the true scientific spirit, and must not the

arrogant assurance with which Nikonov and his fellow-Marxists assert that they possess the key to the "laws" of that immense happening be called, in the deepest sense, unscientific and unhistoric?

BUT INDEED, Nikonov's essay following upon his pompous introduction is nothing but an attempt to lay the responsibility for the Second World War on the shoulders of "the reactionary politicians" of the West. Hard things have been said by English historians about Neville Chamberlain's policy and the distrust of Soviet Russia which partly inspired it; on this side of the iron curtain that can be safely done. But to suggest that "the ruling circles of England, France and the United States" were "unwilling to halt the impending Second World War" is a monstrous distortion. How recklessly Mr. Nikonov can let his preconceived notions prevail over "concrete facts" appears when he writes that the Munich arrangement was greeted with indignation "in democratic circles of various countries." Take England. Who were more indignant than Winston Churchill, Leo Amery and Duff Cooper—each of whom, in the Soviet terminology, would be described as a reactionary? "The peoples," Nikonov goes on, felt that the betrayal of Czechoslovakia must lead to war. The peoples, indeed!—that divine figure in the theory of communism (only in its theory); but what was more striking in those tragic days of 1938 than the naive enthusiasm with which the masses everywhere acclaimed Chamberlain as the savior of peace!

Not a trace of understanding, in Nikonov's essay, for the difficulties which beset Chamberlain. I certainly do not want to play the apologist for that man of unhappy memory. But it would be scientific, or, more simply, honest, to remember that there were some grounds for distrust of Russia and that at any rate Russia's border states, with whose feelings English policy had perforce to reckon, were thrown into a panic at the thought of Russian armies crossing their territories; in fact, their independence has not survived the materialization of what in 1938 remained only the threat.

But of course reflections like these, while extenuating the error committed by the West, would to some

"Unrewriting History"

Recent admissions that history has been distorted in Soviet publications are to be followed up by making the previously secret state archives available to historians. It is, perhaps, unfair to apply Orwellian terminology to what is after all an attempt to bring back into the light of day big chunks of history previously suppressed. But one can no longer use the old cliché that the Russians are "rewriting history." The only apt description of the present process—first used by Reuter's correspondent in a dispatch from Moscow—is "the unrewriting of history." It can hardly be bettered.

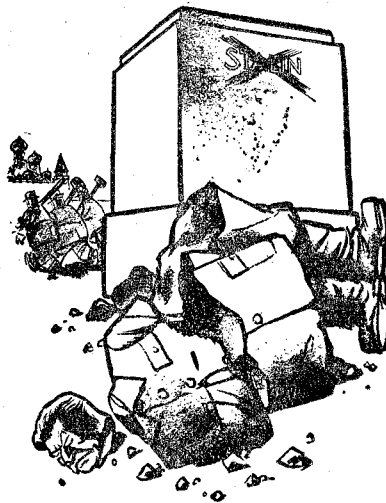
The Manchester Guardian,
March 22, 1956.

extent arraign Russia. And that can on no account be permitted. Never will one word of fundamental criticism against their own government fall from the pen of any of these "scientific" writers. Over against the guilty West their Russia stands immaculate and noble. The real purpose of Nikonov is to condone the Soviet-Hitler agreement of 1939, which made the war inevitable. He pictures it as an act to which the Soviet Union was compelled in self-defense. To stifle all objections to that thesis, which is at best a half-truth, the writer has been careful to avoid all recognition of the exceptional, the lawless and inhuman character of the Hitler regime. He seems to regard it merely as a variant of the capitalist system.

It is worth noting how close is the connection between this kind of history writing and the practical foreign policy of the Soviet Union. Who is not reminded of the speech made in India by Mr. Khrushchev last December, in which he went so far as to accuse England, France and the United States of having brought about the Second World War in order to destroy Russia? A little crude, no doubt, and to some extent the speech had to be explained away. But in the "scientific" atmosphere such as Khrushchev himself helped to create in Russia, the statement cannot have seemed to be anything out of the ordinary.

THIS brings me to a point which struck me very forcibly while in Rome. The mental processes of these historians cannot be explained exclusively by the materialistic and dialectical conception of history. They are equally swayed by—must I say chauvinism? Or is it merely a slavish desire to suit the convenience of their rulers? This is particularly obvious in an essay by V. M. Khvostov in which the writer, with an eye to neutralist leanings and anti-German fears in France, holds up the alliance of 1891 between Czarism and the plutocratic French Republic as a shining example of the great and constant truth that the French and Russian peoples need each other against German militarism.

There are other inconsistencies. Mmes. Stepanova and Lewiowa, writing about the German Revolution of 1848-9, assert that Marx and Engels, by calling upon the German



Herblock in Washington Post
Purge of 1956

proletariat to rise, showed themselves to be the only wise counsellors who understood the needs of the moment and the shape of the future. One may think that this is a crass misreading of the realities of that great crisis, but at least the fallacy can be described as one peculiar to Marxism. When, however, the liberal bourgeoisie is reproved for its "treason" and the democratic middle class for its "cowardice," one is tempted to ask how these classes could be expected to support a movement so immediately threatening their own position. Was not their hanging back "determined," just as was the revolutionary temper of (parts of) the (still very weak) proletariat? One is surprised to see Soviet historians, believing in the inescapable law of progress, writing with so little detachment. But the contradiction that here appears is not due to any individual shortcoming of these two ladies.

Soviet Russia cannot do without the concept of inevitability because nothing contributes so much to keep up the courage and energy of the leading class as does the belief that they are being carried along on the tide of history. But it cannot do without moral indignation either. A generation or two ago Kautsky wrote that in scientific thinking about history there was no room for moral reprobation, but that in the political fight it could not be dispensed with. In fact the doctrine of determination, as Mr. Isaiah Berlin insists in his brilliant treatise on *Historical Inevitability*, will not work in human relationships. Kautsky did not

try to resolve the contradiction. One meets it time and again, stark and as unscientific as anything can be, in the work of Soviet historians.

When Mikoyan quarrels with history as hitherto presented, these are not the errors that he wants remedied. The distortions and mental confusions to which I have drawn attention are not in question. Historians are to be freed neither from their theoretical obsessions nor from their subservience to the supreme power. What Mikoyan means is that they are in the future to refrain from exalting Stalin and one-man rule and to show that collective leadership is the true Communist doctrine. He means that the time has come for them to realize that several of the truths of yesterday have now been discovered to be errors; that, for instance, certain persons who had until now to be reviled as traitors or to be eliminated from history altogether, must henceforth be shown to have been true Communists who were executed by mistake.

AT ROME, Sidorov spoke triumphantly of the historical textbooks published under the new regime. He mentioned editions of more than fifteen—or more than eighteen—millions of copies. One shudders at this *Gleichschaltung* on so gigantic a scale. And when Mikoyan's orders have been carried out and rectifications introduced of the kind I indicated in all those untold millions of books, will there be any reason to rejoice? The spirit will have remained the same.

What are we to do in the face of this terrible phenomenon of masses thus subjugated not only physically but mentally? The very aversion with which the product of Soviet historiography has filled me rouses in me a reaction of hope. Is it possible that the Russian people, a people which produced only a short while ago so vivid, so human a literature, a literature so open to all problems, will sit down forever under this rule of deathlike uniformity and mediocrity?

There is a danger in indulging in optimism. Let us take the awful fate of historical studies in Russia as a challenge to stand by our own principles with more determination than ever and to think and work by the light of them as honestly, as creatively as we can.

SPRING BOOK SECTION

The Ruins of Memory

By Josephine Herbst

WHAT SEEMS to be missing in a good deal of contemporary writing is a sense of the world. The world around us. For some time we have had so many writers trailing their own nervous systems, premonitions, fantasies and horrors that perhaps the time has come to dig up man, the guilty worm, and to see him in relation to an actual world. It has gone so far that the word "actual" may start an argument. I mean it, just the same, in its Jane Austen sense, its Flaubert sense, its Tolstolian sense. To insist on this point of the actual is, practically speaking, avant garde. One thing is certain, we have no avant garde to flutter anybody at present. The one we had got stuck some time back in the pages of the little magazines when they went academic. Then the critics took over. This has been a long period for the critics and editors. The great authors to come up since the Second World War have mostly been dead a long time. Kafka, Melville, Hawthorne, Henry James should be with us always but their resurgence in the forties presaged more than recognition of their stature. It signified also a genteel retreat from a period too complicated to confront easily. The writings of the detached past became a kind of smokescreen to conceal the present dilemma, and the ruins.

But a ruin can be as good a point of departure as any. There is usually new life in the ruins as anyone who ever saw a population react from a bombing can testify. But the pickers-uppers are not trying to salvage tender mementos only. They usually are looking for bricks and firewood.

In the twenties writers seem to have been valued above critics and when a critic really got under the skin he was apt to be a writer. If

you were a young writer then and read Ezra Pound in the *Little Review* or *Poetry Magazine* you were fired to write to the limit of your skill. Today if a young writer reads too much criticism he may feel that there is no use manning the ship which is overmanned already and besides will the captains care for his particular skill?

IF PAST history is any guide, the present phase that tends to the compulsive presentation of people as isolated moral atoms without any sensible relation to society or the ideas of their time ought to have departed before this. For literary epochs come and go but this wave seems to have frozen in the cold war. In the freeze more is paralyzed than anyone cares to admit; perhaps more than the writer dares admit. But there is no such thing as a writer untouched by his time. Even the most inner experience is a response to some outside. That response may lead Kafka to explore the dark region beyond human experience or explanation in *The Castle* or Sean O'Casey to write from a sense of mission *Red Roses for Me*. In a favorable period when the atmosphere is fluid there will be many varieties of response to experience and what emerges is creation in full flower. Not without flaws, the decade of the twenties approached such a time of creative flowering if only because it was relatively hospitable to the new and diverse.

Every period takes stock of the one preceding it and the past that was good enough for the fathers never seems good enough for the children no matter how idyllic it may seem to the great-grandchildren. Writers in the twenties reacted not only to the shock of the First World War but to the values held dear in the nineteenth century. The stock responses of good will and progressive enlightenment as an explanation of human behavior had failed Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson

even before the First World War. The new attitudes were expressed not only in the realm of ideas but were implicit in the texture of the work, its language, its style, even in what came to be tagged "lack of style."

If the values of the nineteenth century failed the writers of the twenties they collapsed utterly in the thirties. What could liberal belief in rationality do against the irrationality which was spreading over Europe? In a period of demoralization and terror it was no bad thing to try to act, however mistakenly or inadequately, as the conscience of the age. If you can bear to lift the black cloth placed over the thirties by the revisionists, some of whom seem more infatuated with the revelation of their own private sense of guilt than in the situation as it *then existed*, you may be surprised to discover work not entirely marred by "innocence" nor requiring the afterthought of "shame." The reaction in the forties, the Second World War, the new cynicism, the new prosperity and the new smugness put the thirties, its work and the sources of its potential, into a time capsule where it has been effectively isolated. But the fact remains that work marked by vitality and venturing did emerge in the arts, the theatre and in the writing of that decade and found a new dynamic.

It is a new dynamic which is now conspicuous by its absence. Material prosperity can never answer the questions, why do we live, what does it mean? When the notion spreads that getting along may be the ultimate aim of man's efforts, the surface hardens and the writer, by nature more of a rebel than he may choose to admit, tries to burrow somewhere for a hidden meaning. If the rigidities set up make it dangerous truly to look at the world around us, the writer may be driven to look only at himself, unrelated to the actual world. But writing *should* be dangerous; as dangerous as Socrates. There should be no refuge for the writer either in the Ivory Tower or the Social Church.

Gissing, whose work Henry James admired, said that in all character

JOSEPHINE HERBST is the author of *Satan's Sergeants*, *Somewhere the Tempest Fell* and other novels; also *New Green World*; John Bartram and the Early Naturalists.

there sits a mind, and that the mind of the dullest is not dull because, at its lowest, it will at least reflect the social dilemma. Perhaps the writers in the thirties were so hard-pressed by the immediacy of the dilemma that they scratched around for characters to explicate it. But it was no longer a time when the Nick Adamases up in Michigan could feel the question of the hour as merely a choice between freedom or that "fat married look." Straws in the wind, out of jobs, out of luck, the Nick Adamases of the thirties might well ask, freedom for what? It was a time when the feelings of the individual might seem haphazard, trivial, inconsequent compared with his feelings experienced as a member of a particular group. As an experience this was not new; soldiers in war know it; European literature has reflected it, but in the thirties it seemed to have had special significance for a nation dedicated to individualism. Some of the writing of the decade reflected this special kind of comprehension. Not every writer was obsessed with "the way out" or the idealized "worker," but as man had become a political animal, whether he liked it or not, the writers most sensitive to the temper of the time were bound to reflect it.

When you read *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, you realize that James Agee was feeling his way into the lives of poor and rejected people from whom his normal fate as a writer might have isolated him. There was discovery here that reminds us of the nineteenth-century Russian literature when Tolstoy attempted to understand far beyond

the boundaries of his estate, and the affairs of Dr. Chekhov informed the writer Chekhov.

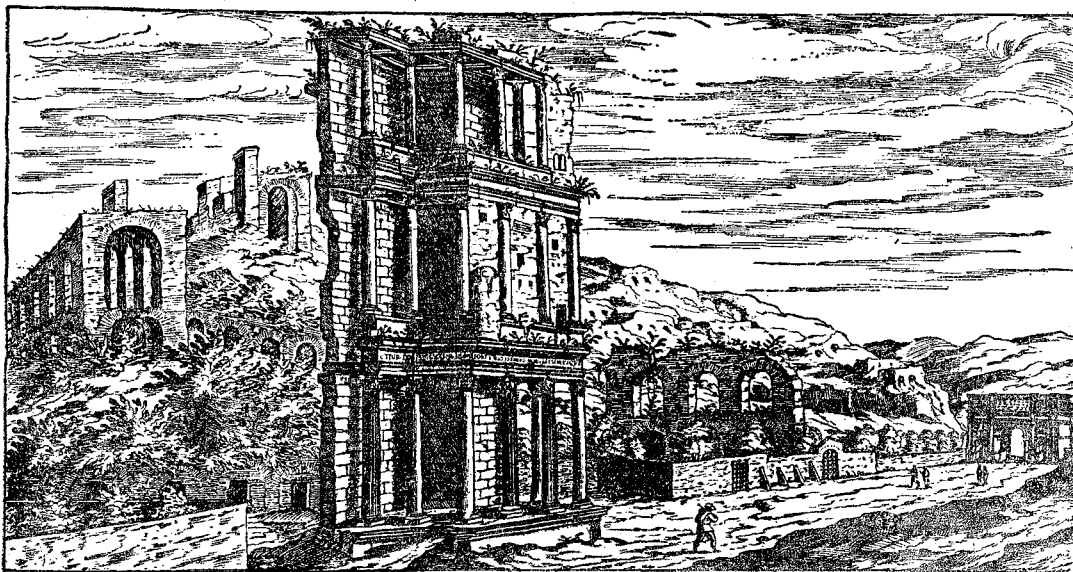
It takes a true writer to show us what has been missing in our lives. No one can give the writer an assignment that his own impulse has not bespoken but more than his security should inform him. "The pen," said Kafka to Janouch, "is not an instrument but an organ of the writer's." But what if that organ suffer a fatty degeneration and come to resemble the diseased liver of a Strassburg goose? What has a writer to say if he agrees that this is the best of all possible worlds and all of our major problems have been solved on a miracle time belt of endless prosperity? Aren't all the Nick Adamases of today fairly courting that "fat married look"? The routine may become boring, and the writer who in his life may batten happily on his role in a priggish status quo, may revert in his writing to the exotic and cash in on a kind of romantic nihilism which never attempts to deal with more than the desperate *sensations* of a felt or imagined experience. Don't our modern Stavrogins tend to wallow luxuriously in their dreadful predicaments? Seen without any surrounding pattern to light the actuality, they emerge as little more than case histories. One pathological case confined to its pathology is not a subject for literary work. Dostoevsky's Stavrogin also struggled against his doomed nature; he killed himself because he had a vision of a human world, not because he saw inhumanity triumphant with himself in a stellar role. His reaction

implied more than a blighted ego.

How did we get where we are? Perhaps if beating the breast in public confession had not become *sine qua non* we might find out. Guilt is real, it is serious, but when it becomes also a fashion, there is corruption. No one can seek for new clues or discover the actual world when it becomes clouded with the smoke of penitents burning the past.

We are not only what we are today but what we were yesterday and if you burn your immediate past there is nothing left but ashes which are all very well for those heads that like nothing better than to be sprinkled with ashes. But are these ash-covered heads really the spokesmen of our conscience? For conscience implies constant vigilance, inquiry, challenge, seeking, wonder. A conscience larded with complacency and self-righteousness is no longer a conscience. And we may well ask what has come out of all this in the way of writing and where and how is the writer facing up to the consequences of his knowledge. Are these frequent stories of innocents whose baffled illusions are made to seem important, oh far more important than life itself, really the expression of man's fate? Is the eccentric really our man of the hour? Life is shown up as a little shabby in comparison to some of this starry-eyed frustration. In fact, many writers seem intent on what D. H. Lawrence called "doing dirt on life."

May a conscience be time-clocked and serve one decade and not another? It is all very well to have pursued with vigilance the psychopaths of "radical conformity," minds



Engraving by Etienne de Perac. Victoria and Albert Museum

April 14, 1956

hardened against any human plea or valid idea embarrassing to the Party. But a mind can harden while manning a power post, any time, any place, whether in politics, government, Hollywood, the university or an institute of art and letters. It can harden while it succumbs to prevailing fashion under any banner.

If the social criticism of the thirties seemed able to analyze the roots only by disparaging the flower, the new detective-critics seem able to admire the flower only by pulling it to pieces. Between the opposing factions of this modern War of the Roses the flower is victimized, and the writer without whom there would be no flower, seems relegated to a Nobody. If behind the leaders of one faction waved the banners demanding a deterministic construction of man's role, behind the leaders of the opposing faction rose the misty phantoms of a Southern feudal aristocracy. Excesses in one direction turned to excesses in another; in both instances we seem to see looming above us the stern father image of an arbitrary authority. It is not only in politics that the age has been thus marked.

THE language of our new critics was seductive, called us to account on many basic literary issues; and since we were fed up with too much democracy in the thirties, the notion of an aristocracy, if only in the arts, made a telling point. Form and precision of language are all important but there is also a point of view and one may well ask in what origins it arises. What assumptions are made from which the elegant flower is to grow? It is not coincidence that most of the writing to please the new detective-critics came from Southerners, most of whom were emigrés living in the North, getting their livings in Northern cities but with all feeling, knowledge and creative source in the South.

If it is our privilege to admire a body of brilliant writing by Southerners, worthy of a lasting place in our literature, it is also pertinent to ask why, in general, it has become so static. If it succeeded in producing a renaissance for which we should be grateful, why did its influence effect a stalemate and degenerate into the picturesque, the bizarre and the exploitation of the eccentric? The insistence on perfection may

produce a Rimbaud, revolutionary in form and content, but it may also settle for an inverted romanticism, a kind of snobbish chastity, implying that the hurly-burly is really not good enough for these particular garments. Then the will to perfection without the valid idea may proliferate into mere decay and tedium, descending into the language and the thought of journalism, relying finally on the violence of the "you-gotta-knock-'em-dead" school. The secret prince and dreamer of perfection may become lost in the glitter of honor, and his talent may then make of him an actor for life.

There is a distinction to be made between the actual writing of the group that produced the renaissance and the effects which followed in their train. This is no challenge to that body of writing; its writers had their aim and had to fulfill it by the inner secret processes of all creative work. But it also seems true that the sights were set toward a traditional past to the extinction of a prevailing present and as a result precluded a dynamic for writers to follow. From the richest section of this country in the sense of a literary potential we have arrived at a dead level of little studies of general decay. But the fact is that the South is not so much decaying as *changing* and it is fair to ask what use other writers in other countries in other epochs made of similar situations of transition. And it seems also to the point to suggest that of all the Southerners, Faulkner, who has mostly stayed put, has been able to gouge deeper, range more widely and feel more intimately the pressure of Southern change and responsibility, and to be, so far as I know, the only writer of the South willing to put himself on record on the murder of young Till.* As for earlier epochs the writer did not have to applaud in order to respond knowingly; Balzac, attached to the feudal past, could take in what was going on around him with everything thrown in; Stendahl could write of the business-king Louis Phillipe so incisively that *The Green Huntsman* could not be published in his lifetime. A response to change was in-

*But see Geismar (p. 306) for Faulkner's later remark on shooting Negroes. There is no better example of the South's defeating ambivalence.—THE EDITORS.

herent in every line of Jane Austen. As for the Russians whose serfs were liberated in the same decade as the Civil War what did they *not* do?

This discussion would fail to make its point if it appeared to set up new goals for more authority instead of more freedoms. The writer has suffered more than the Wars of the Roses in this period. He, like everybody else, seems to have been atomized and a waif on his own, to be shut off from many of the sources of knowledge more freely come by at an earlier period. If his road leads to the university and conformity, it is not altogether by choice, but by grim necessity in a society where the writer has never been a culture-hero. Roving was good for the writer; to have been a reporter undoubtedly informed Ring Lardner, Ernest Hemingway, Stephen Crane. To know far more than he may ever use is imperative for the writer.

We should not have to choose between Dreiser or Henry James. A writer must follow his bent but there are situations when pressures from without press so strongly that he hardly knows if he is bending to his own inner impulse or to some compulsive outside. In these days of specialization, when the scientist may be immured with his experiment without knowledge of what is going on in other laboratories, when he may even be in ignorance of the whole meaning of the cultural processes of which he is a part, it seems to me that the writer too is running a risk of falling back into his own little corner where his very isolation within himself is aiding a sterilization of creative powers. Or in another category, that he too often refuses to confront the implications of his own work, and intending to show the menace of the violent, secretly champions the force he would deplore. If we believe with Henry James that any theory which prevents a writer from seeing is a wrong one, we might also meditate on the words of Rilke: that "everything is gestation and then bringing forth. To let each impression and each germ of feeling come to completion quite in itself, in the dark, in the inexpressible, the unconscious, beyond the reach of one's own understanding, and wait with deep humility and patience the birth-hour of a new clarity; that alone is living the artist's life—in understanding as in work."

The NATION

The Theme Is Fear

THE THEME IS FREEDOM. By John Dos Passos. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$3.50.

By Maxwell Geismar

DOS PASSOS' new book is a collection of his political prose written from 1927 to 1955, together with a running commentary which tells us what he now thinks of what he thought then. A diary of his political development, it is also a dialogue of conflicting beliefs, an uneasy altercation with the past. It is of particular interest as it throws light not only on Dos Passos' own career, but on the whole movement of the twenties, and on the present literary scene. To be blunt, what has gone wrong with him, and with us?

Though Dos Passos is primarily a historical novelist, this question is not purely a matter of political opinion. Even critics who are sympathetic with his present beliefs, such as Granville Hicks, have felt the decline in his fiction. In retrospect, the work of Dos Passos falls into three periods. There is first the expression of the lonely dissident, the esthetic recluse, in *One Man's Initiation* (1920) and *Three Soldiers* (1921). The recent revival of William March's *Company K* should remind us of the eloquent but essentially isolated quality of Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings and even Hemingway as chroniclers of World War I. But almost alone among the high individualists of the 1920's, those gifted expatriates and exiles, Dos Passos had, by the end of the decade, found a cultural base for his literary work.

This base was a theoretical rather than strictly political Marxism. The product of the second period included *Manhattan Transfer* in 1925, and the major trilogy, *U. S. A.*, published from 1930 to 1936. These are still the core of Dos Passos' fiction; they are persuasive and penetrating novels; and their description of American civilization, which hardly applied in the 1930's, may seem all

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too prophetic in the 1950's. But the crux of the Dos Passos problem is right here, too. The collapse of his belief in the Russian Revolution, the disillusionment with the methods of the Communist Party, led not only to a major revision of his thinking, but, apparently, to a complete cessation of his creative energy and his human emotions. There was a psychic wound that has never stopped bleeding.

It is a familiar wound—the stigma of contemporary literature. It has marked and afflicted the careers of Richard Wright, of Malraux in France, of Koestler from middle Europe, and a host of others. It is a central factor in the paralysis of the American intellectuals during the last decade. Bitter ex-radicals like Sidney Hook, or constrained liberals like Lionel Trilling, or romantic reactionaries like Allen Tate and Robert Penn Warren, have set the tone; which is, I think, no tone at all.

AND yet a writer who is concerned primarily with his art should be able to traverse this ideological abyss and keep some sort of perspective. Although a "social critic" myself, or anyhow having been labeled as one, I have never believed that the political area of a writer's thought contains the secret of his creative urge; very often it makes no sense at all. Among the group of Marxist refugees in the literary world, certain figures like Silone in Italy, the late George Orwell in England, or Edmund Wilson and Malcolm Cowley in this country, have still managed to keep their human values intact. Among the others, one may wonder what deeper strain of emotional dependence makes them nurse and cherish their social disappointment to the point of trauma.

One remembers the central emotional configuration in Hemingway's early work: the hunter, the hunted and death. Beneath the factional feuds which have torn apart the intellectuals of the Left, isn't there some still deeper inner attraction which may draw together the fanatical Communists and the fanatical ex-Communists in an embrace of mutual destruction? In the case of Dos Passos himself, who never yielded to the extremes of this psy-

cho-political movement, whose great merit was that he used the Marxist critique always with an edge of skepticism and irony in his best work, is there no other recourse from the curious malady of his maturity? One reads *The Theme Is Freedom* with these questions in mind; one feels that what this artist is seeking is both social and emotional freedom; and in the end, I think, this book provides us with neither. He, too, is rewriting history—the occupational disease of our age—but his inner speculations travel in circles of fear and frustration, while the Communist cage puts bars between him and the world.

There is the familiar material on the Sacco-Vanzetti case and the Harlan miners, where Dos Passos received his first practical lessons in social injustice. There is the account of the Spanish Civil War, where Dos Passos met the harsh and terrifying reality of Russian power-politics; and left the movement. There is the description of the New Deal which he now rather grudgingly concedes was a legitimate and peaceful social revolution. There is, finally, his own spiritual return to Jeffersonian democracy, and to the political heritage of the "English-speaking peoples," which he first announced in *The Ground We Stand On* (1941). All of these facts seem to me true and legitimate. But there are such odd undertones, innuendos, omissions, distortions in this narrative that what should be an informal history of an epoch, witnessed by a sensitive and gifted observer, becomes a nightmare.

One notices the underlying scorn for the "social do-gooders" and "Greenwich Village radicals" to whom Dos Passos himself belonged. (He equates Bohemia and Revolution in these pages as though there had never been a radical and progressive movement in the United States before 1920.) The failure to send arms to the Spanish Loyalists was Franklin Roosevelt's fatal error; he is described with the same malice that Dos Passos showered on the "Meester Veelson" of *Nineteen Nineteen*. Because of this, no doubt, Dos Passos manages to work up some enthusiasm for the Pacific war (and Navy Secretary Forrestal, and for the "deep, traditional patriotism" of regular army officers), while the European theatre comes under the

Not on the Nazi but on the American side! The war against fascism loses all focus in Dos Passos' mind because Russia was our ally, and American liberals were "too busy hating Hitler" to listen to the real truth. The climax of this phase of Dos Passos' thought (he resents being called reactionary) comes in the *Life* magazine article on the failure of Marxism. The New Deal is evil because it leads to English socialism, and English socialism is evil because it leads to Russian communism. That is the real catch—the bugaboo that haunts Dos Passos' mind and corrodes his thinking, just as the House of Morgan was the perfect villain of the First World War. He is a writer obsessed by demons, in the shape of ideas, and these demons take the form of savage and destructive symbols of omnipotent power, which terrify him.

It accounts for our strange concentration of anxiety on the one ritualistic theme of anti-communism, by which every other issue has come to be measured. Thus our crucial domestic battles have been fought out on the popular level, while our intellectual journals have hardly dared to mention them. Our best literary work has come from writers who are outside this intellectual



orbit, where panic has slowly subsided into inertia. One notices that Dos Passos himself, settled in the shadow of Monticello, has lost just those attributes of the old republic which made a whole line of country squires—from Jefferson to Franklin Roosevelt—such a potent force in our social evolution.

Dos Passos, indeed, has become a frightened landlord, guarding his ancestral estate. And as I write these lines, another old-fashioned Southern agrarian, William Faulkner, has just declared that in the final crisis he will have to stand by Mississippi, and shoot down the Negroes in the streets. Well, goodbye to all that.

By John Lehmann

It seems to me a possible explanation of the present state of English letters that the young English writers have been reading too many newspapers. If you take them too seriously, the future looks somber indeed; a huge question mark in the sky against black storm clouds. For the English writers who stand at the start of their careers, the clouds are not all atomic: some of them are economic, for industrial Britain has still not been able to adjust herself to a postwar world where, her rich reserves all drained away in fighting the Axis, her dependence on exports for sheer existence has been brutally

uncovered. Again, the welfare state, her major achievement in civilized progress since 1945, has inevitably laid the emphasis on social security rather than on individual enterprise, on reconciliation rather than on interrogation and revolt. All in all, not too favorable a climate for vigorous experiment and advance in the world of the creative imagination.

Thus goes the most plausible explanation for the fact that the last ten years have been disappointing for many of us who hoped—noting the enthusiastic interest in imaginative literature that spread so far during the war—that a significant literary revival would follow the return of the soldiers from the fighting. It has not followed. There have been one or two noisy outbursts, a great banging together of old dustbin covers and empty cans, to persuade us that at last something was happening. They have not been very convincing demonstrations to a literary editor who has had to rely, more than he ever wished, on critical

studies, literary reminiscences, newly discovered manuscripts of the illustrious dead and stories from other countries to keep up the liveliness of his review. Some of these (in the *London Magazine*) have been excellent, even brilliant, and they may well be helping to prepare the way for a literary revival; but it is sadly overdue.

THE ROW that has developed over here since Dylan Thomas' death, about his real stature as a writer, is symptomatic. Up to his death, one might say, Thomas was generally considered the darling of the high-brows, a poet as rich in the genuine poetic gold as he was difficult for the uninitiated to understand. Suddenly, on his death, the situation is reversed: Dylan Thomas becomes news, one of the most powerful of our Sunday papers organizes a great concert and reading of his works to honor him, and a second, equally crowded evening follows some weeks later in our Festival Hall. That strange feeling, which sometimes comes over even modern industrial communities, is abroad: a sense of loss of spiritual power. At the same time, to the astonishment of his own generation, furious fire opens up on his reputation from a number of the newer critics and poets. One example: a contributor wrote to the *London Magazine* to say that for most people Thomas had become an archetypal image of the Poet; that now that he was dead "something like a panic descends on the world of letters." Immediately Donald Davie, poet, critic and provincial don, wrote back to say that the saddest thing about Thomas' death was "the fulsome ballyhoo which it evoked on both sides of the Atlantic." Further attacks followed from other intellectuals of the same vintage. And recently Philip Oakes, a young short-story writer and journalist of promise, gave an imaginary biography of a "new" writer, in which his enthusiasms were listed as "George Orwell, Dr. Leavis, jazz, old cars," and his antipathies as "Dylan Thomas, provincial culture, European novelists."

This generalization must be taken with a grain of salt. I happen to know that a number of the "new" writers Philip Oakes had in mind are not at all pleased to be characterized in this way. And Dylan

April 14, 1956

Thomas (thank heaven for it) continues to be deeply admired and widely, enthusiastically read, and not merely by poets who were his contemporaries. It is nevertheless symptomatic. The poets of Oakes's generation have talked a lot about "consolidation," and the need to return to clarity and strict form. Paradoxically, they have taken as their master the William Empson who has written some of the most bafflingly obscure and esoteric poems of our time. The reason, however, is not only that Empson has shown a predilection for strict traditional forms (such as the villanelle) but also that in his poetry intellect dominates over emotion; in addition, I suspect, just simply that he is *not* Auden, Spender or Thomas—the masters of their predecessors. Empson has had a sorry influence because it is impossible to write in his manner without appearing to write pastiche. And the pursuit of "consolidation" and eighteenth-century virtues has produced a great deal of neat, accomplished verse the appropriate comment on most of which remains Roy Campbell's epigram on certain Georgian poets:

They use the snaffle and the curb
all right,

But where's the bloody horse?

In an age when technological progress is going ahead at breakneck speed, when the mere threat of the atom bomb is melting old empires and old conceptions like icicles when the wind changes, the attempt to reconstitute an Augustan Age in poetry seems—well, inappropriate is the mildest word I can use. The parallel tendency in prose, which also appears predominantly to be associated with lectures in provincial universities, was made into a "movement" in a series of clever articles in the London weekly *Spectator* where the tongue in the cheek was perhaps not immediately evident to the serious elderly readers of that journal—though the impatient impulse to smash up established metropolitan reputations no doubt was. The three leading figures in this "movement," John Wain, Kingsley Amis and Iris Murdoch, are all critics as well as novelists, and Wain and Amis are also poets. Their claim, or rather the claim that has been made for them (for they are reputed individually to regret having been lumped together in a journalistic

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stunt) is to have re-introduced picaresque comedy to the modern English novel. The claim is over-stated; they are comic writers of uneven achievement among many other comic writers, some of whom undoubtedly have superior technical equipment. Their original act is rather to have introduced a new mood, a mood that has been recognized (often with gloomy distaste) to be the outcome of changed social conditions in Britain. The iconoclastic, truculent, make-as-much-as-you-can-while-the-going-is-good attitude of the characteristic déclassé hero of their novels has so far disgusted Mr. Somerset Maugham that he has publicly announced that he is glad he has little more to do with the country in which such people flourish. Critics junior to Mr. Maugham have been more inclined to query whether a brash mood necessarily makes a good writer; and have deplored that such cock-a-snook clowning should be the best that we can offer in the way of literary "newness" in the last few years.

Looking back over what I have written, I realize that I have painted the present English literary landscape in depressingly drab colors. There is another side to the picture. Kingsley Amis is an extremely clever writer, and his first novel, *Lucky Jim*, a very funny book: he can justly claim to have invented the first comic character to become a symbol and type since Evelyn Waugh's Basil Seal. (Mr. Norris was not typical of anything or anyone except himself.) John Wain is, I believe, a better poet and critic than novelist: his article on R. P. Blackmur's *Language as Gesture*, to take one instance, was an impressive piece of expertise, and his recent poem, called *Poem Feigned to have been Written by an Electronic Brain*, was a moving criticism of modern life (in the Matthew Arnold sense) as well as a brilliant virtuoso display. Thom Gunn, at present teaching in Texas, stands out among the English poets still in their twenties with quite exceptional promise. The English popular ballad tradition, moribund since Kipling's death, has been delightfully revived by Charles Causley. Like Kipling, Causley can strike a deeper note when his feelings are stirred, and has written some beautiful poems in a manner as far from Auden as it is from Empson. There are

other young poets of the postwar generation whose intelligence and sobriety of craftsmanship is of good augury: I would instance Philip Larkin and Elizabeth Jennings. And William Plomer has justly said that in R. S. Thomas, the rector of a country parish in Wales, we have a new "regional poet of more than regional interest." In the novel, too, other new talents have emerged with as lively a claim to our attention as the picaresque school: William Golding, for instance, has written in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors* two novels of highly original imaginative power, totally unlike anything else that has been written by his contemporaries; and Nigel Dennis is a new satirist whose *Cards of Identity* shows a dazzling variety of gifts, though as yet perhaps not entirely under control. One has to remind oneself that "schools" and "groups" are a convenience of the critic (and still more of the propagandist), and that the authors who are going to count most in the long run do not necessarily belong to them.

Staying power: that is the element that has seemed so disappointingly lacking in the brilliant entrants to the literary stakes during the last two decades (and I do not think that lack is by any means a purely British phenomenon). What has happened to Thomas Hinde, whose *Mr. Nicholas* was as good a first novel as one could hope for? Why do F. T. Prince, Henry Reed and David Gascoyne write no more poetry? Why does Terence Tiller write so little? It is all too long since we had a novel from Henry Green or Rex Warner.

Denton Welch died young; but Philip Toynbee, still very much alive, has abandoned the sequence of novels he was at work on and decided that he will write no more fiction. This list of abdications and absences could be extended; it is more cheering to record the steady progress of Angus Wilson, P. H. Newby and William Sansom among the newer novelists and short-story writers, the continuing vitality in their own specialized spheres of poetry of Louis MacNeice, Vernon Watkins and Roy Fuller.

These last three poets made their reputations, or laid the foundations of it, in the thirties, a period that has been heavily attacked by the postwar generation, which declares that it finds its art impure and its political engagement excessive and absurd. These young writers seem to protest too much: one has a suspicion that they are more interested than they will admit in a decade whose positive action and achievement (in literature) contrast with their own hesitations, their lack of passionate conviction. For the last three years a leading poet of the social-political movement of the thirties, Cecil Day Lewis, has been professor of poetry at Oxford. His lectures have always drawn packed audiences; and he is to be succeeded, after decisive victory in another hotly contested election, by W. H. Auden, whose sin in the eyes of the detractors of the thirties is not merely that he *was* the movement but, worse, that he sloped off to America when the game became serious.

One would, I think, be wide of the mark if one concluded from Auden's

Faces and Landscapes

All at once, when she was talking of something
Quite different, and I half listening,
Half thinking of something different, I saw
Beyond her face its peculiar landscape:
I saw how the trees ran and the hills were shaped,
And the bridges and weather there, how
The snow fell because of her and never touched her.
Was it such landscapes, I wondered, that painters
Had seen, in their visions, and tried to construct
In the backgrounds of portraits, to discover
Something more of the faces they painted
Than the mortal features could convey? Had I
Seen her once with so revelatory
A vista behind her, and only now took it in?
Had each of us, or some only, such countrysides
To his heritage? The world is wide.
And how can we know even the place where we stand?"

W. S. MEF

success that radical left-wing views of prewar anti-Fascist flavor were still rampant under the intellectual surface of our country. Auden succeeded because, when it came to the test, it had to be admitted that he was an imaginative creator of unflagging virtuosity and vigor of mind. There is, however, an interesting moral in this, which I suggested at the beginning of this article. The climate of the welfare state has not, I maintained, been favorable to creative experiment: the spiritual irritant of "something rotten in the state of Denmark" that stirs the Hamlets to passionate re-thinking has given way to a rather cosily complacent pride in the provision of free aspirin for all; that there are headaches in plenty for those who look a little further, which can't be cured by aspirin, is beside the point. But in other English-speaking countries of the (former) British Empire,

the situation is quite different: in many of them a social tension has developed since the war, which arises out of the coming to maturity or the struggle for emancipation of the one time "subject" races. A few months ago I wrote in the *London Magazine*: "The novels of Lamming, Selvon and an increasing number of others from the West Indies have something of the same sense of upthrusting vitality and self-discovery that the best working-class books of the thirties had. And is it a mere chance that out of South Africa so much vigorous, imaginative, original writing has emerged during the last ten years?" There is a new English literature growing up overseas, the nerve of which is the tension of social alignments in upheaval. It may still be raw, journalistic, uncertain of itself: but it has the vision and human indignation that sometimes lead to the great achievements in art.

The Other Side of the Mind

HEAVEN AND HELL. By Aldous Huxley. Harper and Brothers. \$2.

By Richard Eberhart

MAN HAS always been dissatisfied with his life on earth. In periods of health and ability he has enjoyed life immensely, but sooner or later came a falling off, recurrent sorrows, destruction and death. The shortness of his stay was early impressed upon him. We have not conquered death and we have dreamed of perfection, of timelessness, of bliss, of immortality.

Poets and painters have presented visions of an Other World, of an ideal life. They have sensed and presented a light that never was on sea or land or have shown a primordial garden before the Fall where the nectarine and curious peach themselves into the hands do reach. Dante, Milton and others have wrestled with notions of Heaven and Hell. Aldous Huxley has written a fascinating and tantalizingly short book on how to extend our horizons.

RICHARD EBERHART, lecturer at Princeton University, has published many books of verse. His most recent volume is *Undercliff: Poems 1946-1953*. Mr. Eberhart was a reader and first president of the *ts Theatre in Cambridge*.

il 14, 1956

His argument, simplified, is this. Marsupials are odd but they really exist; if you go to New South Wales you will see them "hopping about the countryside."

Likewise, we can go to the mind's antipodes "by the aid of a chemical—either mescaline or lysergic acid" or through hypnosis. "The two vehicles carry the consciousness to the same region; but the drug has the longer range and takes its passengers further into *terra incognita*."

Mescaline "probably . . . interferes with the enzyme system that regulates cerebral functioning. By doing so it lowers the efficiency of the brain as an instrument for focusing the mind on the problems of life on the surface of our planet. This lowering of what may be called the biological efficiency of the brain seems to permit the entry into consciousness of certain classes of mental events, which are normally excluded, because they possess no survival value."

What happens under mescaline? "First and foremost is the experience of light. Everything seen by those who visit the mind's antipodes is brilliantly illuminated and seems to shine from within. All colors are intensified to a pitch far beyond anything seen in the normal state, and at the same time the mind's capacity for recognizing fine distinc-

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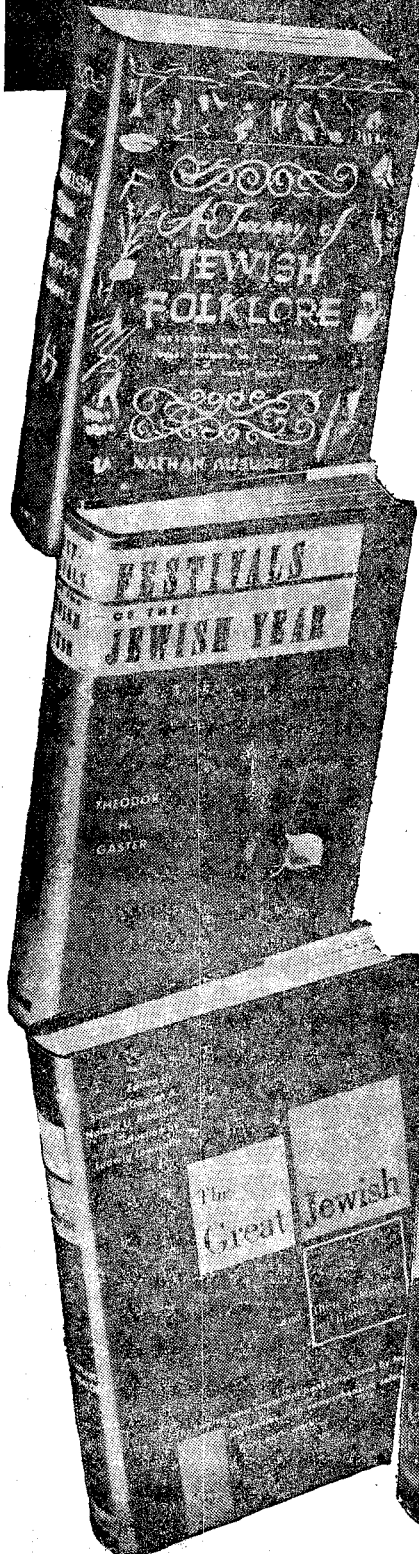


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Poe
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fender of the Faith, or that fiction or poetry are weapons in the class struggle, or in any other struggle, even in that fundamental struggle, the exploring of the person behind the "personality." At the same time he is increasingly conscious of the neurotic aspect of himself as an artist. One might extrapolate this grim vision to the somewhat dubious conclusion that he believes neither in his art as necessary, in himself as sane, nor in his power to influence the society of which he is a part. He looks sometimes rather too much like a man way out on a limb, making faces at himself in a pocket mirror.

IT IS interesting to note how many talented novelists have settled for either describing (ironically of course) the neurotic fringes where they themselves live, or becoming apologists (ironical of course) for the dubious goals of American life. In both cases—the alienated intellectual or the popular novelist—irony is used as a shield. It permits the writer himself to maintain immunity and neutrality, to stay out on his limb in safety, or to adopt prevailing attitudes without really committing himself. It is irony which allows him to expose his own weaknesses and anxieties without coming to terms with them in any radical sense; it is irony which makes it possible for him to ally himself with the whole success racket, while at the same time "seeing through it," and thus saving face. In the field of poetry the use of irony has made possible the incorporation of every ambivalence, under the guise, perhaps, of honesty. One has only to consider the idea of an unequivocally "earnest" poem to feel one's hackles begin to rise, so conditioned have we become to this shield against our deepest selves.

Of course irony can be used as a sword and not as a shield. So it was in Aeschylus and Euripides, where participation between author and audience in knowledge denied the actors was the essence of the drama; the sword of irony held in suspense, provided catharsis when it fell. It was then anything but a shield, for there was no protection in it. It made the Moment of Truth terrible indeed, and the more terrible because foreseen.

In Hardy, who of all modern novelists comes closest to the conception

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of Tragic Irony, it would seem already to have become a shield, the shield against despair in a universe where penalties were imposed for no reason, not even the jealousy of the gods. In Jane Austen, the most beautiful exemplar of Comic Irony, it becomes the shield for an extraordinary sensibility. But in each of these, if irony is a shield, it is the shield of deep feeling, and it is not self-sparing. As J. A. K. Thomson says in his classic book on the subject, the moment irony becomes self-sparing "it ceases to be genuine criticism of life, being only a criticism of other people." The deeper the feeling which it masks, the more itself is the irony.

BY THEIR ironies ye shall know them: one might almost say that the kind of irony employed is the measure of the sensibility involved. One thinks of the irony Housman never outgrew, of the ironies T. S. Eliot has outgrown, or of the irony used against others but never against the self which infects one of our most brilliant novelists today. One thinks also in this context of the rueful irony in Ellen Glasgow, flawed by self-pity, especially as we read her vision of life as expressed in the *Journal*. And one comes finally out of these subjective ironies to the open air, to the savage irony in the later Yeats, or to the mature, warm, wise irony in Thomas Mann, especially in *Felix Krull*. For here we come back to kinds of irony which can after all be coupled with the word "mature." Why? Because they are the irony not of the defeated self but of the mastered self.

Is not irony a legitimate shield in the last analysis only when it presupposes commitment? Is it not something to be earned as detachment is and must be learned through attachment, and not by evading it? "Emotion tempered by common sense, common sense transfigured by emotion," as Thomson re-defines it, this time in relation to Socrates himself. When irony becomes self-protection, an easy way out rather than the saving grace within commitment, does it not seem a rather cheap device? When it springs from an unwillingness to give the self away, when it is the shield not of despair nor of extraordinary sensibility, but of self-preservation and fear, then is it not time to take a second look?

In a poem the use of irony makes it possible for the poet to take refuge at the very moment of self-exposure or exposure of someone else, or exposure of an idea, to take back what he says at the moment of saying it. This lets the reader out too. He will not be shaken to the core if he is told that love is at the same time everything and inevitably faithless. He is permitted to be two-faced. In the novel the use of irony means that the reader will always remain above the melee, and can afford not to be engaged with his full humanity. He does not have to take sides, since the author is at one and the same time taking sides and pointing out the weakness of the side he has taken. The reader is himself shielded by the shield of irony. Under these circumstances it is not probable that art can do what Rilke in the "Sonnet to an Archaic Torso of Apollo" suggested that it might:

Here there is nothing
That does not see you; you
must change your life.

But at least sometimes the function of art is not to rely on a shield and to allow the reader none. It is a risk, of course. It implies intensity. But when the risk is taken, there is always just a chance that the gods will take the place of the graces. And when that happens, art is once again revolutionary and can change men's inner directions.

What I have tried to formulate here is the premise that when American novelists and poets dare once more to commit themselves unequivocally and without false shame to the humanity within them, they will curiously enough earn the right to irony, and irony may once again become the sword, and not as it seems to be now the final self-defense of the scared, the smug and, above all, the uncompassionate.

Evidence of Conscience

THEY FELL FROM GOD'S HANDS. By Hans Werner Richter. Translated by Geoffrey Sainsbury. Dutton. \$4.95.

THE BURNT OFFERING. By Albrecht Goes. Translated by Michael Hamburger. Pantheon Books. \$2.50.

THE REVOLT OF GUNNER ASCH. By Hans Hellmut Kirst. Translated by Robert Kee. Little, Brown and Company. \$3.95.

By Kay Boyle

THERE ARE certain countries that we watch with particular urgency, not only for political events that may alter their histories from within, but for something quite other than this that is as ephemeral as mist, yet as permanent as stone. We hark even to the intervals of silence behind those frontiers, apprehensive of what the mere fact of silence may imply. Russia and Spain are among those countries. So, too, is Germany. "But West Germany is a democracy," the protest may be. "There is no censorship there. German recovery has

astounded the world; German prosperity is the one sign of health in Europe's ailing economy; the new German army is assembling." But what of the individual and his lonely dreams, one asks? Is there a place for them there? For if we are concerned with what happens to truth, to conscience, to principles, on a national scale, then we must believe that there is a familiar terrain on which to meet, even in tragic unfamiliarity. That terrain belongs, perhaps, to the poets and the novelists, and we wait impatiently for the books they will write. We listen in sharp, sad concern for the voices of men of character, those men whom Emerson has described as "the conscience of the society to which they belong." And the books that come out of certain confines must be examined not only as works of art but as evidence; the authors must testify to their own awareness of what man is. If they were books out of Alabama or Mississippi, we should make the same demands upon them. These are books from Germany.

KAY BOYLE lived in Germany from 1948 to 1953. Miss Boyle is the author of *The Smoking Mountain*, stories of post-war Germany, and her most recent novel is *The Seagull on the Step*.

GERMANY. The Germans. The words are still like a sentence passed on the heart of man. (Close your eyes, and shut out the sound of other things from your ears, and you will hear a voice, very young, very shy,

The NATION

saying in German: "We are the generation without ties and without depth. Our depth is the abyss. We are the generation without happiness, without home, and without farewell. . . . They gave us no God to hold our hearts, when the winds of this world surged around it. So we are the generation without God, for we are the generation without ties, without past, and unacknowledged. . . . Do not say to us, because our heart is silent that our heart has no voice, for it speaks no bond and no farewell." It is the voice of Wolfgang Borchert, who was twenty-six when he died* He was a private in the German army that invaded Russia, and, as an afterthought of fate, he was a writer, an actor, a poet. That is all there is to say. But when the books of other German soldiers and German writers are opened, he begins, without actually wishing to interrupt the train of thought, or to call attention to himself, repeating softly: "We are a generation without farewell, stealing away like thieves, because we are afraid of our heart's cry. We are a generation without home-coming, for we have nothing we could come home to, and we have no one to take care of our hearts. . . ." Well, then, lie quiet in your grave for a little, Wolfgang Borchert, and listen while Hans Werner Richter, whose book is before the reviewer, goes on trial.)

Hans Werner Richter raises his

*The book that is not reviewed, but whose author is quoted throughout the present review, is "The Man Outside," by Wolfgang Borchert, translated from the German by David Porter. New Directions. \$3.50.

Sonnet on Nightmares

When bright Orion has declined
His aim obliquely from the Pole,
And darkness taken full control
Of earth and sleeping humankind,

Stampeding from the wastes behind,
The skewbald nightmare and her foal
Plunge their great hoofs and caracole
Against the fences of the mind.

Hold, screaming wire and splintering
rail!

Panic, not malice, drives the beast;
She dares not linger to break in,

For, racing closer on her tail,
She sniffs the horsemen of the East
Who patch their tents with nightmare-
skin.

J. S. MANIFOLD

hand, takes the oath of the artist concerning conscience and integrity, and testifies that he has been in his time a bookseller, a street singer, a chauffeur, a gas-station attendant. He states that he is the son of a fisherman, born in Pomerania (then East Prussia) in 1908, that he was drafted into the German army in 1940, and was taken prisoner by the Americans near Cassino in 1943. "Thomas Mann was the inspiration of my youth and a constant source of consolation during the darkest years of German history," he says. After his liberation, Richter was a founder of the magazine, *Der Ruf*, in Munich. His second novel, *They Fell From God's Hands*, is the book before us now. It was awarded the René Scheckele Prize, with Thomas Mann one of the jury that selected it, and it seems to this reviewer that the book may have been so honored more for what it attempted than for what it achieved.

They Fell From God's Hands tells the story of ten Europeans, three women, seven men, from the time of the outbreak of war in 1939 through the era of the displaced persons' camps in Germany. A young Polish Jew, an Estonian army captain, a Spaniard who has served in the Republican army and cannot return to Spain, a Russian flyer, a Polish girl of indestructible courage and intelligence, who, as a member of the Polish underground, becomes the mistress first of an SS officer, and then of a Red army officer—these are among the scattered group with which the novel deals. Their political convictions, their anguish of the mind and flesh, their hunger, their love, are woven in and out, in and out, endlessly, thread by painstakingly selected thread. Eventually, the entire, confused picture is there before us, like a tapestry, a mural. Despite the lifelike aspect of the various faces of death and betrayal, the record compiled remains a background. No central figure emerges to assess its final meaning, and we do not feel the responsibility, or even the presence, of the author.

It is the reviewer, now playing the role of judge, who must evaluate Hans Werner Richter's testimony before the court. It is terrifying testimony. It is so bitter, so cruel, that we ask in compensation some evidence that the stature of man as man is not entirely lost. The ten displaced

persons of whom Richter writes are, in the words of a rabbi in his book, no more than "the discards of an age that has no conscience," and Richter himself complains: "... for the peace that ensued was, to many, singularly unlike one. Guilty or innocent: that was the question. Many were freed only to face a trial and

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LITTLE, BROWN

another incarceration. Many were held responsible for the fate that had befallen them, a fate they had not chosen nor were able to ward off. Peace might silence the guns, but it did not subdue hatred, a new wave of which swept over the devastated land. Whole nations were condemned out of hand. They were the guilty ones."

"Do not be dead, Wolfgang Borchert," the reviewer said in the dark of night to the young man who would not be able to write any more. "I'm trying not to be," said Borchert. He made an attempt to lift his heavy eyelids, and he seemed to be listening as the next witness was called.

ALBRECHT GOES was born in the same year as Hans Werner Richter, not only the son, but the grandson as well, of Protestant ministers, and a pastor himself in German villages for more than twenty years. And the court is electrified as this witness begins his testimony. The judge, the jury and the spectators can scarcely believe that they are hearing aright. "... it was in December, 1938, I remember the day quite well," the witness states, "it was a very cold day, when the very first woman came in wearing the yellow star on her coat. She came in just when the lunch hour was over, and I was alone in the shop. 'Half a pound of beef, please,' she said, keeping an eye on the door all the time, as if someone were after her. 'Do you want it on the bone?' I asked her, as I always do, and then I saw the star on her coat, very neatly sewn on with yellow thread, it was, strong enough to last a lifetime." That Albrecht Goes put these words into the mouth of a butcher's wife is of no importance. The sound of a man's courage is on every page of *The Burnt Offering*. "But in the evening," continues the testimony of Albrecht Goes, or of Frau Walter, the butcher's wife, or of the conscience of a nation, "[when] my husband had put away the paper and was fiddling about with the radio, I asked him: 'What really went on the other day at the synagogue, and why couldn't you put out the fire?' At that time he was serving in the auxiliary fire service. ... 'That's simple,' my husband said, 'when we'd never fixed the hose to the hydrant.'"

It is not a long book, but in it

Albrecht Goes has written things we have listened a long time to hear. One reads it first for the story, and then reads it again out of love for the people in it: Frau Walker, Sabine ("Sabine the practical, Sabine the ruler, Sabine the high-spirited, Sabine the fugitive, Sabine the most mysterious creature on God's earth"); out of love for Sabine's father, for Rabbi Ehrenreich, with his shopping-net, and for the librarian, the narrator, who has accepted the responsibility of the society to which he belongs. And one reads it a third time as a poetic legend which should have an enduring place in German literary history. It is the legend of a Frankfurt butcher's wife, who, while her husband is a prisoner of war, is designated by the local Gauleiter to be the butcher for the Jews. The two young men from the political department inform her, and then they burst out laughing. "The Jews' butcher, the Jews' butcher!" At last they told me the rest," Frau Walker's deposition goes. "From now on all the Jews in the town would be allowed to buy their meat only in my shop, and on Fridays . . . between five and seven. . . . The next day the sinister bit of news appeared in a list of local instructions. . . ." There is silence, absolute silence for a moment, and then the voice of one of Frau Walker's regular customers calls out: "Only be sure you give the

Lore

Man walks, I learn, in fear of woman,
Possession of the constant moon;
Because the moon has strength to
summon

Her blood to the full and ebb again,
And gives her strength beyond her own.

A girl then, Graves writes in his book*,
Can fade the purple out of cloth
And tarnish mirrors with her look,
And by the power of her thought
Make one branch grow and another rot.

But if she should, at such a time,
Go further, and lift up her dress,
She can discover the hidden crime,
Flatten a storm on the high seas,
Cure either boils or barrenness.

So great the power of her moon
That, as the Talmud said,
If she should walk between two men
And no appropriate prayer is read,
The one of them will drop down dead.

HOWARD NEMEROV

*The White Goddess.

place a good airing on Fridays, or no Christian will be able to stand it the next day, Frau Walker." And another voice calls: "My husband's just home on leave, he'd like to know whether you wouldn't like him to lend you his gas mask for next Friday night." And then Frau Walker, or Albrecht Goes, or the conscience of a people admits quite fearlessly: "Well, if I wasn't wise till then to what was brewing up, I certainly had a good idea now."

These are the simplest things that could possibly be written, and yet they have been the most difficult thing for any German to write. But Albrecht Goes, this Protestant pastor with the warm, rich heart, evades nothing, not even the word "guilt" which German pride and German fatalism have rendered taboo. The answer, Goes tells us, is that all of them—even he who merely shares the knowledge of that guilt—all of them who saved and were saved, "have been retained for further service." On this clear note of hope, his testimony ends.

The Revolt of Gunner Asch is a book of quite another sort. Hans Hellmut Kirst makes no mention of Jews, or gas chambers, or responsibility, but his book has a value and an impact of its own. It is the farcical story of the rebellion of a soldier in the German army a year before the outbreak of the war. It is good theatre, broad comedy, and is as appealing evidence against the army system and the army brass as a Bill Mauldin cartoon. If the men, and their girls, in this satire on barracks life in Hitler's Germany, are more types than individual women and men, it does not matter. Hans Hellmut Kirst, a man who himself survived ten years of German army life, is out, first and foremost, to ridicule the military tradition, and that the book has sold well over a million copies in translation in European countries is a good thing to hear.

"Perhaps we are a generation full of arrival on a new star, in a new life," said Wolfgang Borchert, tentatively. He was feeling for the hand of someone in the darkness, the hand of anyone who might be there. "Perhaps we are a generation full of arrival at a new love, at a new laughter, at a new God," he said, speaking so gently that it did not sound like German at all.

The NATION

Poetry and the Vocal Tradition

By Lawrence Lipton

BEFORE the invention of printing, poetry was still largely a vocal art. The poets of antiquity were preserved in scrolls and bound books of manuscript, but contemporary poetry passed from hand to hand in much the same way that scripts and musical scores circulated among actors, musicians and impresarios. Ever since its beginning in the ritual drama of antiquity, when the poet was priest, shaman, seer, healer, judge, bard, singly or in varying combinations, poetry was something to be spoken, chanted or sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments. It was the "spell," a form of words which performed one of the vital functions of ritual, along with music, drama and dance. When the arts of the ritual drama were individualized and secularized, poetry retained its vocal nature. "We beg your hearing patiently," begins the player in *Hamlet*, just as milleniums before him "Moses spake in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song. . . Give ear, ye heavens and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth."

Literary historians have paid little or no attention to the effect of printing on poetry as a vocal art. Even so acute and conscientious a scholar as George Saintsbury, whose century-by-century "interchapters" seldom miss a single significant event in English literature, summed up the fifteenth century without taking note of the effect of printing on the ballad, a literary form to which he was partial and on which he did some of his most brilliant writing. A critic with an ear for the vocal in poetry, Saintsbury notes "the great change from a stressed and alliterative to a quantitative and rhymed prosody, which took place, with us, from about 1200 A. D.," but on the effect of the press on the vocal tradition he is silent. For a hint of the effect of movable types on the art of minstrelsy one has to go back to

Thomas Percy's introduction to his famous *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1763):

The reader will observe in the more ancient ballads of this collection a cast of style and measure very different from that of contemporary poets of higher class. . . I mean such as professedly wrote for the press. For it is to be ob-

served that as long as the minstrels subsisted, they seem never to have designed their rhymes for literary publication. . . . But as the old minstrels gradually wore out, a new race of ballad-writers succeeded, an inferior sort of minor poets who wrote narrative songs merely for the press.

The poets who wrote "merely for the press" may have been inferior poets in Percy's eyes, but they were also "poets of a higher class." Since books were still very expensive in Percy's time, and since only the well-born and the well-heeled could

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LAWRENCE LIPTON is the author of *Brother, The Laugh Is Bitter and In Secret Battle*. He has recently published a book of verse, *Rainbow at Midnight*.

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afford an education, that is, a *reading* education, something of the glamor of upper-class social prestige rubbed off on the poets who wrote for publication.

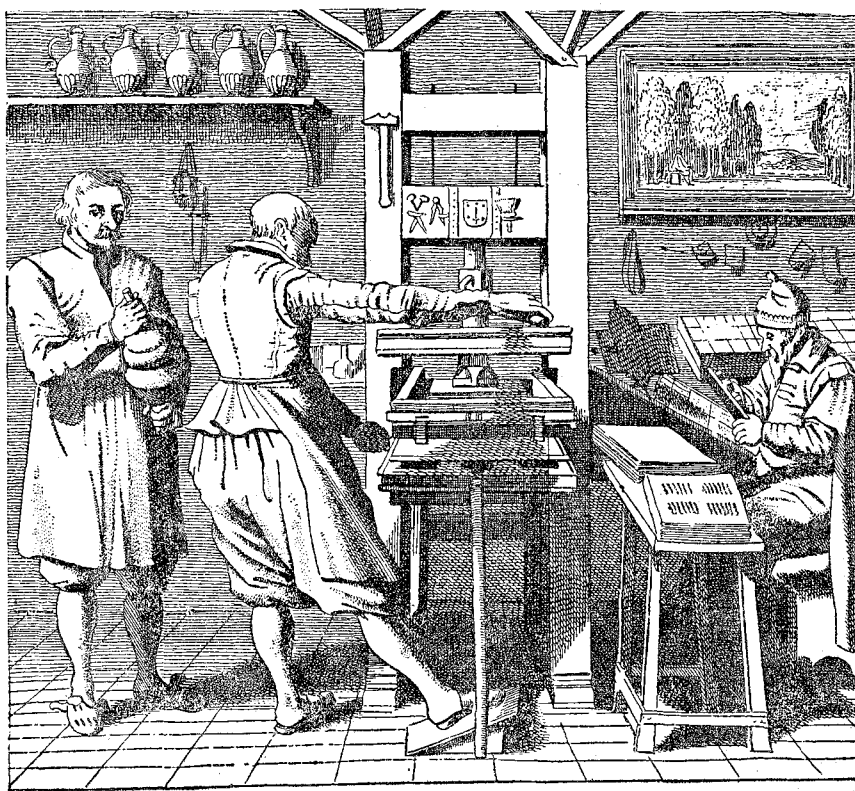
Edwin Muir comes closer to the heart of the matter, I think, than anyone else who has written on the subject. In *A Note on Scottish Ballads* he puts his finger on the essential point when he speaks of the poetic image. "The ballads go immediately to that point beyond which it is impossible to go, and touch the very bounds of passion and of life; and they achieve great poetry by an unconditionality which rejects, where other literatures use, the image. In no poetry, probably, in the world is there less imagery than in the ballads." This, he goes on to say, "is not the sign of poetic debility, but of a terrific simplicity and intensity, an intensity which never loosens into reflection; and reflection is one of the moods in which images are given to the mind. . . . It is this utter absence of reflection which distinguishes them also from the English ballads."

Vocal poetry need not be and is not everywhere as devoid of trope as are the Scottish ballads, but directness and intensity are certainly characteristics that distinguish the essentially vocal from the essentially visual in poetry. As Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan have found in their research on the new mass media at the University of Toronto (see their report in the Spring number of the *Chicago Review*), "each communication channel codifies reality differently and thereby influences, to a surprising degree, the content of the message communicated." Writing, they say, did not record oral language: "It was a new language, which the spoken word came to imitate. . . . This embalming process froze language, eliminated the art of ambiguity. . . . The word became a static symbol, applicable to and separable from that which it symbolized. It now belonged to the objective world; it could be seen. Now came the distinction between being and meaning. . . . The word became a neutral symbol, no longer an inextricable part of the creative process. Gutenberg completed the process. . . . The new mass media—film, radio, television—are new languages, their grammars as yet unknown." With the emer-

gence of BBC's Third Programme, with more and more radio programs devoted to poetry readings in the U. S., with phonograph recordings, "quartet" recitals, personal-appearance tours, "poets in residence" at the universities, and the recent attempts to restore spoken verse to the stage, poetry as a vocal art becomes once more a topic for discussion.

IN cultures that had a bardic tradition poetry remained a vocal art longer than elsewhere, despite the introduction of printing. Tagore wrote fifty dramas, and set many of his poems to music. The vocal tradition of Greek poetry is still apparent in the frequently epistolary style of Kavafis, and comes through even in the translations of Philip Sherard, just as the conversational, poet-to-listener quality of the contemporary Phivos Delphis comes through in the English adaptations of James Boyer May; the I addressing the You, directly, as in speech. Dylan Thomas is, of course, the outstanding example in Welsh poetry, which never lost the vocal tradition. French poetry, despite the classical Italian models it followed after the sixteenth century, especially in poetic drama, remained a poetry for the ear. Malherbe's insistence on the *mot juste*, which has influenced so

much of French writing since his time, is based on vocal considerations as much as on the visual image and exact meaning. German poetry, from Goethe to Brecht, is too obviously vocal to require documentation. In the Middle Ages the monasteries preserved the bardic poetry just as it preserved the "pagan" learning of the past—under lock and key, as a librarian today might admire the books of Henry Miller and keep them on a restricted list. But it was the vagabond poets, those "wandering scholars"—errant "clerks" from the universities, the goliards and the *vagi*—who in their *Vagantlieder* kept poetry alive and lively as a vocal art until it was tamed by the better-known troubadours and made into a sophisticated entertainment for the nobility. The Church Councils issued edicts against them, and even such sympathetic modern scholars as Helen Waddell (*The Wandering Scholars*) and George F. Whicher (*The Goliard Poets*) too often sound like some fond and indulgent uncle "explaining" the conduct of a gifted but wayward nephew. They are rather like Bishop Percy in his dedication of the *Reliques* to the Countess of Northumberland, his patroness, praising his balladeers—"By such bards, madam, as I am now introducing to your



Dutch Printing Press; XV Century

presence, was the infancy of genius nurtured," and in the same breath apologizing for "having nothing better to offer than the rude songs of ancient minstrels."

It wasn't only that patronage was apt to be patronizing, but that the bardic tradition was from the first a subversive, or potentially subversive, tradition. The bard, like the fool, ruled "where the writ does not run." And the fact that his art was a vocal art, and thus in direct contact with the common people, made him all the more dangerous. Even the court poets were there on sufferance, and more than one of them turned on their patrons and espoused some common cause with the people.

In countries where no strong central authority existed, or where the ruler was foreign or remote, the bardic tradition stood a better chance of survival. Ireland is one example. Wales is another, and, to a lesser extent, Scotland. The long-stateless Jews never completely lost it. In England the bardic tradition is feeble and "borrowed at third hand, by way of the Norman-French romances from ancient British, Gallic and Irish sources," according to Robert Graves, who goes on to say that "this explains why there is not the same instinctive reverence for the name of poet in the English countryside as there is in the remotest parts of Wales, Ireland and the Highlands."

SUCH cultural borrowings need not be enfeebling; on the contrary they can enrich and invigorate, but in order to do so they must be assimilated at the level of common speech and not merely on the level of literary influences. As Helen Waddell has observed, the trochaic tetrameter of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, which is far older than its literary sponsorship, was the marching song of Caesar's legions, was taken over by Hilarius for the Church Militant, reached Ireland where it became the basis of most Irish meters; then "in the ninth century it is a wild lament for the slaughter at Fontenay; at the end of the tenth century a wandering scholar sang it in the Rhine valley. It sets itself again to trampling horses' feet, when Guillaume IX, Duke of Aquitaine, sang to it 'Qu'una donna s'es clamada de sos gardadors a mei,' and then in Venice to a chamber melody, *A Toccata at Ga-*

lippi, and so back to the soldiers again, 'Where the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the bay.'" In short, it must be assimilated at the vocal level, and not as in England only on the literary level, as the Norman-French romances were assimilated. These ended where they began, on the printed page.

The same might have been the case in the United States, where the poetic tradition derives from England, had it not been for the successive waves of German, Irish, Jewish, Polish and Italian immigration. The bardic-prophetic strain with its strong vocal character never quite took when Walt Whitman tried to graft it onto the England-via-New England tradition. It was not until the present century, when the assimilation of these groups began to bear literary fruit, that something like an American poetry began to appear. I use the word assimilation to describe not a one-way but an interactive process, as in the case of popular speech. One glance at H. L. Mencken's *The American Language* will illustrate what I mean. So will any restaurant menu. Or the lyrics, and in many cases the melodies, of popular songs. And the vocabulary, even the speech rhythms, of the theatre, transformed as they have been by O'Neill, Rice, Saroyan, Miller, Hellman and Odets. Similar racial elements, once "foreign" but now thoroughly assimilated, are present in all twentieth-century American literature, as well as in the other arts.

A significant development is the increasingly important work that is being done by Jews in American poetry, a field which in the past has been marked by their almost complete absence. To judge by the cultural origins of many important novelists and poets, the new American tradition that is now in the making is not going to be in the England-via-New England line of descent. Irish, Jewish, Polish, German and now Welsh elements are in it, as well as Italian, and of course the always leavening Negro element, which is no longer confined to music. But in the field of criticism there is something like a cultural lag. The schools and the reputation-making organs are still in the hands of teachers, critics and editors in the England-via-New England tradition. Once it was the finger-counting crit-

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ics and the Poet's Corner. Now it is the New Criticism.

The bardic tradition, as we have seen, is strongly vocal, and rests on a broad democratic and libertarian base. On the other hand, the New Criticism is partial to the visual image, technical and textual in method, and anti-democratic in its politics as well as in its conception of the social role of the poet. T. S. Eliot, on whose poetry and criticism this critical school is based, has made no secret of it that he is a "royalist in politics." John Crowe Ransom, whose book *The New Criticism* (1941) gave the school its name, added the college-trained man to the list of the elite, touting Donne and Milton, the latter a Cambridge man and the former twice-blessed, having attended both Oxford and Cambridge, and down-grading Shakespeare as an "amateur" lacking "university discipline," a poor craftsman in his sonnets, and an inferior poet. The New Criticism is "class-angled" just as the Proletcult was or the book reviews in the *Daily Worker*—with this difference, that the Communists attack the writers they disapprove of and the New Critics ignore them.

Cleanth Brooks' and Robert Penn Warren's *Understanding Poetry* was published in 1938 and revised in 1950, and has become a textbook for college students, as it was designed to be. In line with its authors' emphasis on esthetic and technical criteria, the modern poetry selections "are intended to represent some of the various lines taken in the development of poetic method in this century." But surely criteria other than those of method must be sought to account for the omission of Dahlberg, Barker, Ciardi, Laman-tia, Spender, Honig, Patchen, Rex-roth, Zukovsky, Rukeyser, Lindsay, Masters, Sandburg, MacDiarmid, Durrell, Fuller, Aiken, Gregory, Howard Sergeant and the Benés in a book that has room for A. E. Housman, Joyce Kilmer and Ogden Nash. What significant contributions did Dowson make that entitles him to be included, to the exclusion of Walt Whitman? These questions answer themselves, in part at least, when one examines the authors' comments and the "exercises" they prescribe for the student. Every-where the emphasis is on structure, texture, pattern, *method*. There is a

great deal on scansion and metrics, but always the emphasis is on how to *read* a poem. Nowhere is the student reminded that the poem on the printed page is not the poem, any more than the printed score is a piece of music; that in this respect a printed poem resembles a musical score more than it resembles a piece of printed prose. When this text-book was revised, many modern poets were available on recordings, yet there is no mention of it. Has the student nothing to learn about poetry from listening to it?

The controversy that still centers on Dylan Thomas is pertinent to our subject. Karl Shapiro, writing in *Poetry* (November, 1955), applies the familiar critical yardstick to Thomas' poems, with admirably balanced judgment; then, "something happened."

Somehow the spark escaped; it leapt out of the hands of literature and set a fire. [Literature isn't supposed to set any fires? L. L.] Thomas, I think, did the impossible in modern poetry. He made a jump to an audience which, we have been taught to believe, does not exist. It is an audience that understands him even when they cannot understand his poetry. It is probably the first non-funereal poetry audience in fifty years, an audience that has been deprived of poetry by fiat.

Deprived? By whom? And who was it taught us that such an audience does not exist? As for the audience

understanding *him* but not his poetry, Thomas has more than one audience; some understand his poems better than others. Let those who know tell those who do not know. The bards, too, often spoke "darkly" and in "riddles."

But bard, according to Thomas Hornsby Ferril, is something like a bad word. Writing in his column in the *Rocky Mountain Herald* (quoted from *Poetry Public*, current number) this poet-critic says that "Dylan Thomas was not a great poet, he was not the lyric genius of the twentieth-century, but by bardic talent, vocal magic and behavior . . . was lucky enough to move into the vacuum left by the turncoat Marx-ists [the Auden, Spender, Isherwood group. L. L.] as they started high-tailing it to the sanctuary of Mother Church and the floodlights of American lecture platforms." Here the bardic talent becomes a synonym for mere showmanship and a picturesque platform appearance. Thomas lacked the well-groomed look and the unmodulated monotone of the typical prize-winning poet. What puzzles most of his critics is that Thomas was able to keep his images "hard," hard enough to satisfy even so exacting a critic as Elder Olson, and yet hold a listening audience. Poetry, in order to be vocal, need not be as sparing in its use of trope as was the Scottish ballad. What distinguishes vocal poetry from both

On the Poet William Carlos Williams

"... who says
Just enough, softly, for all
The thousands of years to remember."

—KENNETH REXROTH

When saints, sitting after dinner
Lighting their pipes
Drinking the last of the beer
Sitting becalmed

Think of men at all
They think of men like him.

They nod, flex hands, chuckle through yellow teeth.
Turn from the food to the books
Notice the darkening.

Smile.

Thinking of men like him.

After a while they go out in the garden
Smelling the last of the light
Watching the earth gulp down the last of it.
Kissing good-bye to it.

They enter the house in the dark, huddled.
"Leave a light, Giorgio," one of them says,

"He'll be along."

DAN LANGTON

imagist and objectivist poetry is the free expression of emotions like pity and anger, and the fact that it voices opinions and ideas, often about such matters as war and social justice. Asked to read for vocal recording (*Pleasure Dome*, Columbia), Marianne Moore did not choose such characteristically objectivist lines as

.... The zebras, supreme in their abnormality; the elephants with their fog-colored skin and strictly practical appendages were there, the small cats; and the parakeet—
trivial and humdrum on examination. . . .
(from "The Monkeys")

She chose instead to read "In Distrust of Merits," one of the poems in which she expresses ideas and opinions, and offers personal confessions like—

There never was a war that was not inward; I must fight till I have conquered in myself what causes war, but I would not believe it.
I inwardly did nothing.
O Iscariotlike crime!

The imagists in their effort to pit hardness and concentration against Victorian looseness and prolixity, and the objectivists in their effort to replace Victorian abstractness and moralizing with "scientific" concreteness and detachment, have well-nigh drained their poetry of passion as well as opinion. It reads well, but it *sounds* flat. Of course, if you've been taught to believe that literature shouldn't set any fires, and that a listening audience doesn't exist, an optience will do. Obscure literary allusions can always be explained in a few pages of notes, and the professional explicators can be depended upon to unravel your obscurities. This is not to say that poetry in order to be vocally viable must be written to be understood at a single reading or a single hearing. Poetry has always been written on more than one level of meaning.

I am aware that some of these strictures have been directed against modern poetry of the greatest literary merit and poets of the most irreproachable character by people who never made half an effort to understand them and by poets and critics who are intellectually and emotionally bogged down in literary ormolu and critical bric-a-brac. Nothing that I say here is intended

to give comfort to the "Sanity in Art" crowd, or to "This is Poetry and This is *not* Poetry" editors like Stanton A. Coblenz, who are still fighting a rear-guard action against all "radical" poetry. Their poesy is no more listenable than it is readable to modern taste and the modern mind.

THAT a wider hearing of poetry will result in a reappraisal of reputations there can be no question. That in some cases the lesser poet who is blest with a good voice and is a canny showman may win wider acclaim than the better poet with a frog in his throat is also probable. But more important than the hazards of reputation is the prospect that a poetry of the spoken word opens up at least the possibility of a modern poetry in the bardic tradition, and makes the poet once more a public man in the best sense of the term. Now, perhaps, poets like Ewart Milne, William Pillin, Hugh MacDiarmid, Philip Lamentia, Leslie Woolf Hedley, James Schevill, Kenneth Lawrence Beau-doin, George Abbe, James Boyer May and Thomas McGrath, whose work is marked by one or more of such qualities as the rhapsodic, the lyrical, the vatic, the direct, topical, nonconformist, democratic and libertarian, will finally get a hearing—in the literal sense for which so much of their poetry is designed. If Columbia will not record them, maybe Caedmon will, and if Caedman won't, new companies will be formed who will, just as new publishers arose who brought out the first writings of the now famous novelists and poets of the twenties when the old-line publishers rejected them.

A truly functional poetry in the old bardic sense is not to be expected, of course, until we once more have a truly functional society, a community, not a collective in which a population area is called a "market," even by book publishers and recording companies. A society designed for living, not for death. The work of the poets I have mentioned points in that direction. Through them, and others I lack the space to enumerate, the bardic-prophetic voice is coming back into English poetry, stemming, as so many of these poets do, from cultures with a long bardic, vocal tradition. If they are not being show-

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ered with prizes and recorded in Columbia's swanky hundred-dollar albums it is because they dare to "wage contention with the time's decay." In this respect they are in the tradition of the bard, rather than the gleeman, the *vagantes* rather than court troubadors. Of them it might be said as Yeshua bar Yoseph,

himself a wandering poet and prophet, said of John the Baptist when the slummers came out of Jerusalem to gape at him: "What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? . . . a man clothed in fine raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in king's houses."

Impatience of the East

THE COLOR CURTAIN. By Richard Wright. The World Publishing Company. \$3.75.

By **Guy Wint**

AS TIME goes by, the Bandung Conference may increasingly be regarded as crucial. Few people saw all its significance while it was sitting, even those who were fascinated by it as spectacle. Richard Wright was an exception. He went to the conference believing it to be one of the great events of his generation, and he has now tried to convey his vision. His book is sub-titled Report on the Conference, but it is scarcely that, for he does not give a systematic narrative of its proceedings. Instead he describes the background, the mind of the delegates, their bitter grievances against the West. He is filled with foreboding that all this bitterness may issue in a great assault against the West.

As a Negro, Mr. Wright felt himself able to understand the racial sentiments of Asians, and as a novelist he felt himself able to express them convincingly. He says that Asians confide in a Negro American as they never would in white Americans. His vision may lack balance and urbanity—but that is the nature of visions. He may make errors of fact—but visions transcend fact, and can be true even if some of the details are fictitious. Mr. Wright makes one peculiar judgment. He thinks that the air of Bandung was suffused by religious consciousness as well as by race. Other onlookers at the conference do not seem to have noticed the religion very much.

Mr. Wright's conclusion is that the Bandung Conference exposed, not a yearning toward communism,

or egalitarian extremism, but the demand by ancient and proud peoples that they should again play a major part in international affairs. They address this demand to the West, because they feel that the West still restricts their activities and keeps them too much out of the sun. "If the West spurns their call," says Mr. Wright, "what will happen? I don't know. But remember that Mr. Chou En-lai stands there, waiting, patient, with no record of racial practices behind him." To prevent Asia going Communist, Mr. Wright thinks first that the West must abandon all its assumptions of racial superiority. Second, an economic levelling-up must be accepted voluntarily by the West. "The white Westerner," says Mr. Wright, "will have to accept, for an unspecified length of time, a much, much lower standard of living, for that is what the de-Occidentalization of present-day mankind will bring about." The long delays in instituting SUNFED do not hold out much hope for this voluntary abnegation.

It is an emotional book. It says little about some of the most important elements of the Asian problem, such as the driving force of the ever-growing populations. But it does one thing very well. It compels the reader to be more aware of the burning racial feelings. A kind of deception has been put on the world by the good humor of the end of British rule in India, and the surprisingly cordial relations which have existed since between Indian political leaders and Britain. But this cordiality may not last, nor are other Asian peoples as tolerant as some Indians of this generation, nor has all colonial power been surrendered in such a satisfactory way as in India. Bandung showed the true feeling, and this book reports it accurately.

GUY WINT, author of Spotlight on Asia, is on the staff of The Manchester Guardian.

The Point Is Irrelevance

By Kenneth Rexroth

ALTHOUGH Samuel Beckett has been around for a good many years, Roger Blin's production of *Waiting for Godot—En Attendant Godot*—at the Theatre Babylone, two years ago in Paris, catapulted him into an international reputation. Tennessee Williams is reported of the opinion that *Godot* is the greatest play since Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Right off let me say that I agree with him. Furthermore, I think *Molloy* is the most significant—laying aside the question of greatness—novel published in any language since World War II.*

Beckett is so significant, or so great, because he has said the final word to date in the long indictment of industrial and commercial civilization which began with Blake, Sade, Hölderlin, Baudelaire, and has continued to our day with Lawrence, Céline, Miller, and whose most forthright recent voices have been Artaud and Jean Genet.

Now this is not only the main stream of what the squares call Western European culture, by which they mean the culture of the capitalist era; it is really all the stream there is. Anything else, however gaudy in its day, has proved to be beneath the contempt of history. This is a singular phenomenon. There has been no other civilization in history whose culture bearers never had a good word to say for it. Beckett raises the issue of what is wrong with us with particular violence because his indictment is not only the most thorough-going but also the sanest. It is easy enough to write off Lautreamont, who seems to have literally believed that the vulva of the universe was going to gobble him up, or Artaud, who believed that bad little people inhabited his bowels. The cyclone fence around the mad house is certainly a great

comfort. The trouble is, Beckett is on this side of the fence. He is not only an artist of consummate skill who has learned every lesson from everybody who had anything to teach at all—from Lord Dunsany to Marcel Proust and Gertrude Stein. (Compare the plot of *Godot* with that little theatre chestnut of Dunsany's, *The Glittering Gate*.) He also has a mind of singular toughness and stability—a mind like an eighteenth-century Englishman, as sly as Gibbon, as compassionate as Johnson, as bold as Wilkes, as Olympian as Fielding. I don't mean that he is "as good as" a mixture of all these people. I mean he is their moral contemporary. "Courage, sir," said Johnson to Boswell.

BECKETT refuses to run off to Africa and die of gangrene, or write childish poems to prostitutes, or even see angels in a tree. When a prophet refuses to go crazy, he becomes a problem, crucifixion being as complicated as it is in humanitarian America. When *Godot* was put on in Miami, *Variety* and Walter Winchell instantly recognizing themselves as two of the leading characters in the play, turned on it with a savagery remarkable even for them. Nevertheless, one of the most promising things about the reception of Beckett in America is the large amount of favorable notice he has received—not just in the quarterlies and *The Nation*, the *New Republic* and *Commonweal*, but in small-town book columns scattered over the country. The European reception of Beckett in the last couple of years, as you know if you keep up with things over there, has been dizzying. He has become an international public figure like Lolla-brigida or Khrushchev.

Beckett's first published work was a six-page pamphlet, *Whoroscope* (Nancy Cunard, the Hours Press, Paris, 1930). This is a poem, like the poems we were all writing then—at least I was, and Louis Zukovsky, and Walter Lowenfels and a few other people—very disassociated and recombined, with two pages of notes. Its point is that although René Descartes separated spirit and mat-

*Molloy. Grove Press. \$3.

Waiting for Godot. Grove Press. \$1.

KENNETH REXROTH, author of many books of poetry, will bring out this year translations of Japanese, Chinese, Greek and French poems. He conducts a radio book-review program on KPFA, San Francisco.

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ter and considered man an angel riding a bicycle, mortality caught up with him and the spirit betrayed him—the angel wore out the bicycle and the bicycle abraded the angel. This has remained one of Beckett's main themes—what is mortality for? And the point of view has never changed. That is, he has carefully pared away from what they call his universe of discourse everything except those questions which cannot be answered. He gives plenty of answers—Pozzo and Lucky in *Godot*—the sempiternal master and man, are of course an answer. And, of course, an irrelevant answer. They owe their existence, as does all the “matter” (in Aristotle's sense) of Beckett's art, to their irrelevance.

In 1931, he did for Chatto and Windus a seventy-two-page guide to Proust, a masterpiece of irascible insight worthy to rank with Jonson on Savage. It is one of the very best pieces of modern criticism and somebody should certainly resurrect and reprint it. It is difficult to resist quoting it extensively. In the concluding pages, he says,

The quality of language is more important than any system of ethics or esthetics . . . form is the concretion of content, the revelation of a world. . . . He assimilates the human to the vegetal. . . . His men and women are victims of their volition—active with a grotesque, predetermined activity within the narrow limits of an impure world. . . . But shameless. . . . The . . . stasis is contemplative, a pure act of understanding, will-less, the “amabilis insania.” . . . From this point of view, opera is less complete than vaudeville, which at least inaugurates the comedy of an exhaustive enumeration. . . . In one passage, he describes the recurrent mystical experience as a purely musical impression, non-extensive, entirely original, irreducible to any order of impression—sine materia . . . the invisible reality that damns the life of the body on earth as a penum and reveals the meaning of the word defunctus.

The most cursory reading of five pages of *Molloy* or *Godot* will reveal the present significance of these words in the practice of Beckett himself.

Murphy (London 1938, Paris 1947) went unnoticed in the blizzard of “social” literature. It is the story of the quest for the person in terms of the quest for a valid asceticism. At the end *Murphy* has not found himself because he has not found

what he can validly do without or safely do with. He may be on the brink of such a discovery, but mortality overtakes him. It is as though Arjuna had been poleaxed in his chariot while Krishna rambled sententiously on.

Watt was written in 1945 but published in Paris in 1953. “What” in Irish is pronounced “watt.” It is a step forward in the best possible medium for Beckett's vision—the grim humor of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Lear*, Machiavelli's *Mandragola* and Jonson's *Volpone*. Its concern is the problem, who is who, and its corollary, what is what.

Looking at a pot, for example, or thinking of a pot, at one of Mr. Knott's pots, of one of Mr. Knott's pots, it was in vain that Watt said, Pot, pot. Well, perhaps not quite in vain, but very nearly. For it was not a pot, the more he looked, the more he reflected, the more he felt sure of that, that it was not a pot at all. It resembled a pot, it was almost a pot, but it was not a pot of which one could say, Pot, pot, and be comforted.

I hope you noticed the sentence, “Well, perhaps not quite in vain, but very nearly.” Because that is the gist of the matter and the plot of the novel, the point, so to speak. And it is the point of a good deal of Beckett.

Molloy is the story of two journalists, two keepers of personal, disorganized journals in the dark, light-years beyond the end of night. Molloy, a cripple, is left eventually on his belly in the gloom, clawing his way forward with his crutches. Possibly he is seeking his mother—at least at times that is the impression.

Eventually he crawls to a room somewhere where “they”—the “they” of Edward Lear's limericks—bring him food and writing material and take away for their own purposes his narrative as he writes it week by week. It is a grim revery of empty progress through time and space, punctuated with dog-like sex and paretic battle.

Moran, the subject of the second half of the novel, is a more recognizable literary figure—the hunter with all the characteristics of the hunted: Inspector Maigret with the personality of Gregor; the inspector in *Crime and Punishment* replaced by Smerdyakov from *Karamazov*. At the orders of a hidden boss whom Beckett, with a minimum of effort, invests with terrors of Fu Manchu, Moran hunts Molloy. In the process he loses his son and all the appurtenances of his personality, and becomes indistinguishable from his quarry. At the end he possibly encounters and kills Molloy without knowing it. On crutches himself, in the night, in the rain, he discovers a voice, and writes in turn his narrative.

Molloy is the drama, totally devoid of event, of relevant event, of the seekers and the finders, of whom it has been said: “Finders keepers, losers weepers.”

The other two novels, yet to be translated from the French, are *Malone Meurt* (Paris, 1951), and *L'Innommable* (Paris, 1953). Malone is another lonely writer, locked in a room and fed like a beast. He is trying to find his own existence by, as it were, describing his anti-self, by describing a hero who will be progressively differentiated from Ma-

Portrait of a Poet

(After Lewis Morris, 1700-1765)

“Nawdd Duw rhag y fath ddyn!”

What beggar, tinker, or sow-gelder
Groped more in the dirt? Look at him, with a can,
Running the streets for beer! Kind God, deliver
Us all from such a tom-turd little man,
Who rowls in mire like any pig, looks wild
As any mountain-cat, without the brain
God gave an ass, or some poor sawney child
To find his way to shelter from the rain.

What poet ever flew higher? When he sings,
And the right fit is on him, you can hear
His angel in him, and his music springs
Wine-strong, and honey-sweet, and water-clear.
Oh, what a mishmash!—for celestial sense
To sty itself in this muck residence.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

The NATION

lone. But he cannot do it. He cannot even keep track of the other's name, and he finally comes to write a story that sounds like an exhausted Sade, and which is, of course, the story of Malone.

L'Innomable is exactly what its title says—the narrative of someone without a name who cannot find a name, who never does.

Waiting for Godot is that rare play, the distillation of dramatic essence which we have been talking about for the whole twentieth century, and about which we have done, alas, so little. Its peers are the Japanese Noh drama and the American burlesque comedy team. It is not just a play of situation—a situation which, in the Japanese Noh drama, reveals its own essence like a crystal. It just is a situation. The crystal isn't there. Two tramps, two utterly dispossessed, alienated, and disaffiliated beings, are waiting for somebody who is never going to come and who might be God. Not because they have any faith in his coming—although one does, a little—but because waiting requires less effort than anything else. They are not seeking meaning. The meaning is in the waiting. They are interrupted by the eruption into their contemplative lives of "The World," "Western Civilization"—or anything else like that that might be put in capital letters—in the persons of Pozzo and Lucky, Master and Man—two cacophonous marionettes of stunning horror. On their second appearance Pozzo and Lucky grow even more horrible and considerably less stunning. Otherwise, time does not pass. Today cannot recall yesterday, and tomorrow is not coming. The meaning is in the waiting. And in the tree, which overnight, between the acts, manages a few flimsy leaves. In the void, Beckett's tramps idle, analogues of Kanzan and Jitoku, the clown saints of Zen. Vladimir says, "Well, shall we go?" Estragon says, "Yes, let's go." Beckett says, "*They do not move. Curtain.*"

Theatrically speaking, in terms of an evening's entertainment, I have given a falsely bleak picture. The play is hilariously funny. All the traditional business that has come down from the Romans through Italian comedy to burlesque, to the red-nosed, derby-hatted, baggy-pantsed burlesque clown is exploited. But it is not exploited in its own terms.

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Each passage of business worthy of Chaplin or Buster Keaton at their best is transmuted by a terrible light, like the deadly rays of unimaginable colors that shine in science fiction.

I think this summary of his achievement to date and its meaning has been fair to Beckett. Now there is nothing left, since I have already implied that he is an artist of consummate attainment, but an attempt to answer the question, since he is a moral artist, is it true? Do these books represent a valid judgment of the human situation? I do not like to sound like an editorial in *Pravda*, but I doubt it, partly. It is not absolutely true at its most superficial level. The world ill, *le mal mondiale*, is not only limited in time to the last two hundred years, but it is limited in space to that very little peninsula, Europe, and to the new lands Europe has overrun. I realize that it is imbecilic to say, "Why doesn't Beckett (or Artaud or Céline or Miller) sing the glories of our Stakhanovite workers and collectivist farmers and tractor drivers, or of our jet pilots and cobalt atom splitters? Where is the New Man, the Hero of the Twentieth Century?" And all critics who object to Beckett reduce themselves eventually to this level, the level of Zhdanov, *Variety*, MacLeish. But the light is never spent. Heroism is only smoldering and will flame up after these dark ages are

over. The society in which we live is destroying the person and the communion of persons. First we self and the other (not the anti-humanist, Kafka-Kierkegaard, Godot—the "utterly other"—but Buber's "I and thou" on a purely secular plane). That is the current problem, the superficial "message" of Beckett's books, and it is, historically, superficial and temporary.

As for the permanent one, not superficially: this is Beckett's main subject, and here his judgment is not invalid, because it is the judgment of Homer, of the literature of heroes. The world is blind, and random. If we persist in judging it in human terms it is malignant and frivolous. Only man is loyal and kind and brave. Only man loves. Zeus thunders like the empty sky. Aphrodite ruts like her pigeons. If we refuse to accept the world on secular terms, Godot isn't coming. If we accept it for ourselves, the comradeship of men, whether verminous tramps with unmanageable pants or Jim and Huck Finn drifting through all the universe on their raft—the comradeship of men in work, in art, or simply in waiting, in the utterly unacquisitive act of waiting—is an ultimate value, so ultimate that it gives life sufficient dignity and satisfaction. So say Homer and Samuel Beckett and everybody else, too, who has ever been worth his salt.

these lacks may be set down to the circumstances of our youth as a cultural entity. We have the talent, we have the wherewithal, many of us still have the desire to create the equivalent of the Comédie Française, the Moscow Art Theatre, the German state and city theatres, the old Vic. Nevertheless, there is something amiss somewhere.

CONSIDER: the theatre is a group art entirely dependent on team work and our stage is run as an enterprise for individual benefits and private interests. Ends and means are at odds. Playwrights and actors today are very much more "earnest" than they were fifty years ago: they read more, do not blush to mention art in speaking of the theatre, go to symphony concerts and art galleries. They discuss Stanislavsky, have heard of Gordon Craig, know of Reinhardt's reputation, remember Stark Young and are willing to attend and work in several high-minded studios. Yet in practice—and their practice, through no fault of their own, is insufficient for the development of any thoroughgoing craftsmanship—their conduct is professionally more selfish than that of their hearty but barbarous stage forebears. The present organization of the stage makes every one think of personal career, individual success, private glory. "The motives of our worst," Keats wrote of English political men in 1818, "are interest, and of our best, vanity." The theatre, filled today with soulful characters who are slightly revolted by the crassness of show business, is something like that.

No one is to blame. A few years ago everyone was sure that the source of our theatre troubles could be set down to stagehand unions. But now if we look steadily we see that everyone in the theatre—actors are probably the least culpable—behaves in his own way as the stagehands were accused of doing. "Brooklyn hates the Bronx," a 1935 Odets character said in his quaint way to describe the dog-eat-dog pattern of our competitive way of life. The playwright today treats the actor, the producer, the director as instruments of his purpose—which is "to put the play over" and win him riches and renown. The playwright, who adores his actors when they are serving his aim and looks upon his director as a kind of medicine man and ma-

The House of Discord

By Harold Clurman

WE ALL KNOW the story: the American theatre has made great strides in the past twenty-five years. America boasts a fine corps of writers for the stage—men who choose relevant native themes and treat them with a degree of competence and honesty rare before 1920; no country commands a greater abundance of young acting talent; our directors compare favorably with and are perhaps superior to those in England and France; our designers are alert and even eager to experiment. We rejoice too that the past season has been the best in years. (Like the garment industry, we tend to speak of the theatre in terms of seasons.)

There is a certain amount of statistical worry. Whereas more than

200 new productions were offered each theatrical year to New Yorkers in the mid-twenties, the average for the past five years has been about sixty. No matter: the theatre is in fine shape—*Tiger at the Gates*, *The Chalk Garden*, *The Lark*, *The Diary of Anne Frank* were or are all categorized more or less as hits. Off Broadway, we get to see Pirandello, Strindberg, Shaw, Chekhov, Turgenyev; and on the fringes of the town even smatterings of Shakespeare.

Yet is it not true that anyone who takes the theatre seriously either as business or art feels a certain uneasiness? We must dismiss for the moment the obvious fact that we have no state theatre, very few community theatres, no permanent companies, no repertory houses. All

gician when things are going well, is usually the first to declare (or to believe when it is whispered in venomous consolation) that the actors or the director or the producer or all three ruined his faultless play.

The fact that the actor or the director is something of a person too, that he is entitled to his own temperament problem and process of development, is at bottom something which makes the playwright quite impatient: he really wishes everyone connected with his play would perform like the fabled supermarionette Craig once conjured up.

Actors are equally eager to get ahead. Who will say they are wrong? But they will often suit themselves to the detriment of the play, their fellow actors and the audience. They frequently use their plays, directors, producers as stepping stones to a fatter part in another play, to a movie or a television contract according to their convenience. If the play is less than a masterpiece—there is a tendency in the theatre to speak as if those were a dime a dozen—the actor will often patronize the playwright and not only suggest that he “made” the play but that he might be willing to put himself out for it—for example keep playing his role somewhat longer than is personally convenient to him—if the play were really of a superior quality.

Toward the monied angels who supply the funds for production playwrights and actors alike display indifference if not contempt. Some day I shall draw up a spirited brief in defense of the role and rights of backers, for no man of the theatre should allow himself to scorn the ground upon which he stands.

“Brigands are convinced of what?” Baudelaire once asked, and answered, “That they must succeed.” There is a kind of sanctified racketeering in the theatre induced by the dream of success in money, in publicity, in glittering goods, in social esteem. With brigandage there is fear; from fear arises superstition. Instead of workmanlike understanding there are fetishes. There are boxoffice actors, name directors, hit houses, top producers, great playwrights. And who can be more frightened than one of our great playwrights?

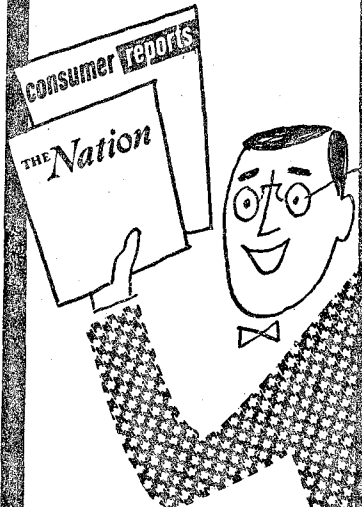
When a great playwright (or a name director) hits a snag—and hasn’t immediately left town to avoid unfortunate encounters—he is asked

querulously “What happened?” In vain does the playwright cite to himself the difficult careers of Ibsen, Chekhov, Shaw, not to mention artists in other media; in vain does he recall that one does not mount the ladder of achievement in an even and regular progression of steps. He feels, or is made to feel, that he is slipping, that he may be finished, that he may have been only a flash in the pan, that people no longer believe in him and that there may even be some awkwardness about finding money for his next play. He is no longer sure that he can or should write another play. He speaks wistfully of writing novels, of going into movies, or television or of providing the “book” for a musical.

THE director, himself in the midst of the latent tug-of-war over which he is supposed to exercise a paternal and calming influence, often succeeds in inspiring a sense of creative togetherness, but this only endures while he remains in active charge—during the rehearsal period and for the first month after the opening. Since we have no permanent companies to which the director can maintain a close alliance, many a director—like everyone else—becomes a “shopper” in the theatre. Shortly after the play opens, the director becomes involved in a new deal, and tends to allow the reins of his authority to slacken. If he is a “name” director, he becomes wary of undertaking any play which seems too risky, for in case of failure he will either be tasked with poor judgment in scripts or having been somehow shaky in his technique. It is not at all uncommon for a director to be congratulated on his superb artistry by producer, playwright and the cast immediately before the opening, and to have all of these begin to suspect his soundness the moment the press and public reaction indicate coldness. The director, then, is frequently transformed into a cagey and nervous gambler whose judgment of scripts grows warped.

Into this absurd nightmare enters the “artist’s representative,” the agent. Many playwrights and actors of standing today will heed their agent—perhaps because his motive is always simon pure and not sullied with insubstantial artistic notions—beyond the advice of the most knowledgeable fellow craftsman. For many

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theatre people, the agent furnishes the only true pattern of wisdom—when it is not the psychoanalyst.

The historian will see in this barely exaggerated account merely another symptom of our insane social structure. Surely economics have a great deal to do with the atmosphere I have described, though not capitalism as such—since the same situation does not obtain to the same degree in England, France, Germany. Surely our press and our audiences by their distorted point of view contribute to the chaos, but they are more a reflection of the situation than a cause.

I was brought up in a very old-fashioned way to believe that the serious craftsman ought to be as much a leader as a follower, that there was a certain science and discipline in every craft, that these entailed a moral capacity to master one's immediate selfish interest on behalf of one's greater interest—the objective task one has set oneself. Since in the theatre that task was by definition collective, one had to view oneself and one's work in relation to the general aim.

Such an attitude is dictated by self-respect and knowledge of one's business. If one's business is simply to aggrandize oneself through success (whether it be wealth or "one's name in the papers"), it doesn't really matter much, as the aforementioned French poet pointed out, how

Song

Come let us dance, my love,
Meet in the airy mind
Over water, under fire,
Now every stone must move
And every tree be kind,
The juggler on his wire
Leap with pure lightness
And never fall to yearning;
Come, love, into the brightness,
And farewell gravitation
And now never mourning,
But sweet levitation.

Come let us sleep, my love,
Deep in the dark mind,
Over fire, under stone,
Nor changing moon believe,
Now every dream is kind,
And no one is alone.
You who still would fly me,
Here's an end to hunting,
Sleep, love, in the psyche,
So long and so deep,
There's an end to haunting:
It is myth we keep.

MAY SARTON

one accomplishes it. But if one is in the theatre for the theatre's purpose, one must hold fast to its essential tenets—otherwise even talent becomes a lethal weapon. I have never had anything but regard for the gentlemen known generically as "the Shuberts" (our stage's real-estate and financial interests), but it is difficult for me not to mix some pity and contempt with my regard for those accomplished, sensitive and famous artists of the theatre who as they grow more secure in their acclaim employ it not as a responsibility and as a challenge, but as a bastion of self-indulgence—against everyone else in the theatre. Above all it is painful to see the sophistica-

tion and superior instruction recently acquired in our best schools and studios employed to rationalize and disguise the wolfish acquisitiveness of our shivering souls.

We used to say: we must not be so mortally afraid of being comparatively poor, of setbacks, of criticism, of relative obscurity. The old morality of the theatre which my generation and the younger now can repeat by rote are living and practical things—and are meant to be applied without a millenium or mythical Moscow Art Theatre—against all the odds of pressures and the old Adam—right now, right here if we are ever to have something other than a seasonal theatre.

Music

B. H. Haggin

THE Metropolitan's new *Don Pasquale* is a brilliant achievement by Wolfgang Roth who did the set and costumes, Dino Yannopoulos who staged the production, Fernando Corena who sings the title role, and Thomas Schippers who conducts. Perhaps the conducting that maintains continuous tension in its supple shaping of the work should be mentioned first, since it is the crucial factor in the successful operation: without it the brilliant scenery, staging and singing would fail; with it there would be an exciting performance even with rags of scenery and less brilliant singing. The conducting is in any case what one is impressed by first, in the performance of the overture; then the rising curtain discloses the ingenious set, whose occasional revolving not only produces quick changes of scene but becomes part of the fun on the stage. This fun ranges from uproarious clowning to quietly contrived bits like *Don Pasquale*, in expectation of the visit of his bride-to-be, departing in procession with his three servants carrying the Roman head that has decorated his drawing room, and returning a half-hour later with the three servants carrying a nude female figure. And what makes it all work is Corena, with his comic gift and his powers of presence and projection.

With Corena there is Valletti, who uses his beautiful light tenor

with fine musical style. And in the performance I attended there were Gueden and Guarrera. Gueden sang florid passages with undiminished agility and accuracy, and in melodic passages the lower range of her voice still was lovely; but its upper range was unlovely in timbre and quavered. And Guarrera's voice too, in the few years since I last heard it, had not only lost much of its bloom but had acquired a strong quaver.

At a later performance of *Boris Godunov* one point of interest was Siepi's Boris, which was sung more sensitively and more beautifully than London's, and also was more sensitively and impressively acted. In addition Siepi worked less hard at getting the English words across, so that one was spared a large number of them.

To what I said in my earlier review about the inept stage direction I will add a word about Dino Yannopoulos' fussing with ingenious irrelevancies while he leaves undone what is essential. Shuisky's seizure of the throne after Boris' death may be a historical fact, but it is one that Musorgsky's opera doesn't deal with: as far as Musorgsky is concerned what happens in the Duma scene is that Boris, after the collapse caused by Pimen's narrative, is left alone with his son for their farewell, and the curtain, at the end, falls on the tsarevitch weeping over his father's dead body. But Yanno-

poulos distracts us during the farewell by having Shuisky linger ominously in the background, and again at the end by having him ascend the steps to the throne followed by the eyes of the terrified tsarevitch. And on the other hand when Shuisky should exhibit awareness of the effect Pimen's narrative is having on Boris and the boyars, Yannopoulos allows us to be disturbed by the incongruity of Shuisky sitting impassive amid the growing commotion, as though he were hearing a report on falling hog prices.

MORE important is the difference in what I heard at this performance as a result of sitting in the grand tier. In the Metropolitan the sound of the orchestra rises toward the balconies; so that where I sat in the grand tier the orchestral activity in which Musorgsky is generally considered to exhibit fumbling ineptitude was heard far more clearly than in the rear of the parquet at previous performances. And in what I now heard it was evident that Musorgsky was concerned not with the lustrous sound that most listeners consider the manifestation of competence in orchestration, but with the sombre "sonorous image" (Aaron Copland's useful term) that was correct for the musico-dramatic

purpose; and that in the moment-to-moment achievement of this sonorous image he was operating not with fumbling ineptitude but with an ever-astounding assured mastery in the use of a thoroughly worked out and consistent orchestral vocabulary. It is true that at the Metropolitan one hears the Musorgsky orchestration as revised by Karol Rathaus; but it is evident from its sombre character that Rathaus scrupulously limited himself to strengthening what Musorgsky himself had contrived.

If one thinks of the history of this work in the world's opera houses one must conclude that in nothing else he has done has Mr. Bing exhibited more intelligence and courage than in his production of the Musorgsky original ("Musorgsky's so-called original," as one of my colleagues put it in his loaded prose). Certainly he has exhibited less intelligence and courage in his further decision to piece together the production out of whatever odds and ends he could find in the storehouse. I haven't seen everything at the Metropolitan, but there cannot be anything more shabby, clumsy and confused than this *Boris*. Yet such is the power of Musorgsky's music that the audience stays to the end and cheers after the final Kromy scene.

Big Claus and Little Claus

"Giddyap, all my horses!"
Cried Little Claus,
Thus angering Big Claus,
Who had warned him.

For those horses, every one,
Were owned by Big Claus,
Little Claus's older brother
Who by mistake killed the Old Grandmother,
Who had been a drag on the family,
Eating the things
That otherwise
Would have gone to Little Claus.

Yet Little Claus had greatly loved her,
Even giving her his bed to sleep in,
Whereat Big Claus killed her by mistake,
Thinking to kill Little Claus,
But killing the Old Grandmother
That lay there in the dark,
In the bed of Little Claus,
Because Little Claus had been kind to her.

And so Big Claus was hanged as a bad man,
And Little Claus got the horses after all—
And put flowers on the Old Grandmother's grave.

This is a story
Thank up by Little Claus.

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TV Forecast

April 15 through 20

(See local papers for time and channel)

Sunday, April 15

COLLEGE PRESS CONFERENCE (ABC). Senator Henry M. Jackson (D. Wash.) to be questioned on the nation's defense program with emphasis on guided missiles.

BELOVED OUTCAST (NBC; Catholic Hour). Biographical play about America's first Negro bishop, James A. Healey, who was born in slavery.

WIDE WIDE WORLD (NBC). Theme of this week's panorama is "The Pursuit of Happiness": use of increased leisure time as demonstrated by Children's Dance Theatre in Salt Lake City, a horseback trip through the Arizona mountains, the story of the Seattle Symphony.

SALUTE TO BASEBALL (NBC; Sunday Spectacular). Great players now and in the past, films of historic moments, Shoeless Joe ballet from "Damn Yankees" will be part of this first baseball spectacular. Art Linkletter will preside. (Color).

THE HUMAN TOUCH (CBS; Front Row Center). Lisa Kirk, of "Kiss Me Kate" fame, stars in this show business play, based on a story which she wrote and which is based in part on her own career.

Tuesday, April 17

RED SKELTON SHOW (CBS). Concerning a hypnotist who demonstrates his technique before a nation-wide audience, but makes the mistake of choosing Skelton as his subject; plus a burlesque of TV viewers.

Friday, April 20

GOOD MORNING WITH WILL ROGERS, JR. (CBS). Representative Emanuel Celler (D. N. Y.) will describe the work and preliminary findings of judiciary committee investigating what constitutes Presidential physical disability.

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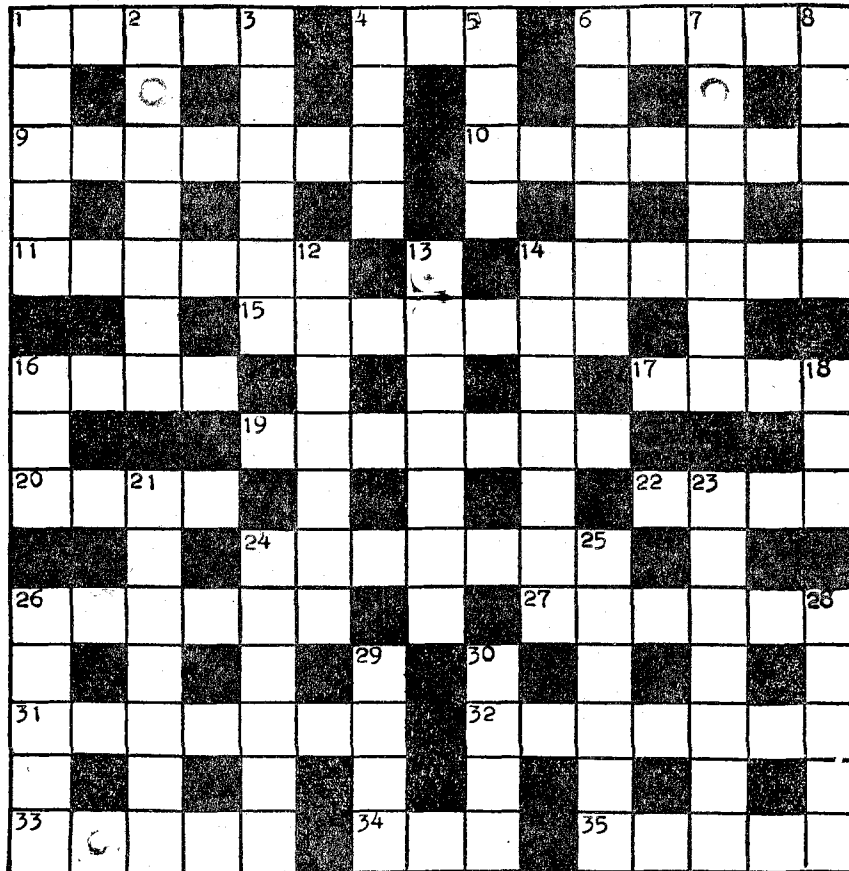
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Crossword Puzzle No. 667

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

- 1 and 4 See 14 across
- 6 and 6 down Most are a sort of synonym for one. (5,6)
- 9 Let parasites go every direction except west. (7)
- 10 Catalog the small types, so one hears. (7)
- 11 See 14 across
- 14, 17, 34, 4 across, 16 down, 1 across, 5, 31, 11 Implying one is made out of board? (4,2,4,3,3,3,1,4,4,3,4,3,3)
- 15 Bicarbonate of soda for the old-timer? (7)
- 16 One might conclude something with this name. (4)
- 17 See 14 across
- 19 This hair isn't found only under the barber's chair. (7)
- 20 Journalist, and a peculiar sort. (4)
- 22 Here's how, when absent! (4)
- 24 Outfit. (7)
- 26 Through with this in two languages, the same as 9. (6)
- 27 A pair came like this, perhaps, and met trouble. (6)
- 31 See 14 across
- 32 19 cried out with a wild beast. (It's an early form of late letter.) (7)
- 33 Are Cockney hoboos double these. (5)
- 34 See 14 across
- 35 See 2 down

DOWN

- 1 Does it involve a canine getting into the cement, for example? On the contrary! (5)
- 2 and 35 The decline of Goldwyn? (7,2,3)
- 3 They cross back and forth, but not

- the diamond variety. (6)
- 4 Supplements a sort of what they do after you hide. (4)
- 5 See 14 across
- 6 See 6 across
- 7 Is it furtive to the last? (7)
- 8 The social position of America's teachers? (5)
- 12 A singular kind of 24 down with a sullen look. (7)
- 13 Wax lyrical about 18, in getting something out of sight. (7)
- 14 Met up with a nuisance on the stage. (7)
- 16 See 14 across
- 18 Draw a literal version of 2. (3)
- 21 Run true to form as a rear structure. (7)
- 23 The Spanish gentleman concealed a split log. (7)
- 24 Catches, or tries to. (6)
- 25 A better carriage than some, if you don't take it to extremes. (6)
- 26 Scrutinize or discover an American 6 and 6, especially with brass. (5)
- 28 Painter who might suit a sort of 16 to a T. (5)
- 29 Prop. (4)
- 30 Some might say it looks so divine in ballet. (14)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE 666

ACROSS: 1 UNION SHOPS; 6 LAID; 10 PEBBLES; 11 AVENGES; 12 ISIS; 13 CANDELABRA; 15 OFFENSE; 16 and 27 THE MAN I LOVE; 17 OUTPOST; 20 SEND-OFF; 22 HALLELUJAH; 23 CHIC; 25 COVETED; 26 DIABOLO; 28 FEVERISHLY. DOWN: 1 UNPHILOSOPHICAL; 2 IN BRIEF; 3 NULL; 4 HOSTAGE; 5 PLAUDIT; 7 ALGEBRA; 8 DISSATISFACTORY; 9 WELL-BEING; 14 INNOCENTS; 18 TEL AVIV; 19 TRUNDLE; 20 SWADDLE; 21 OSHKOSH; 24 TAXI.

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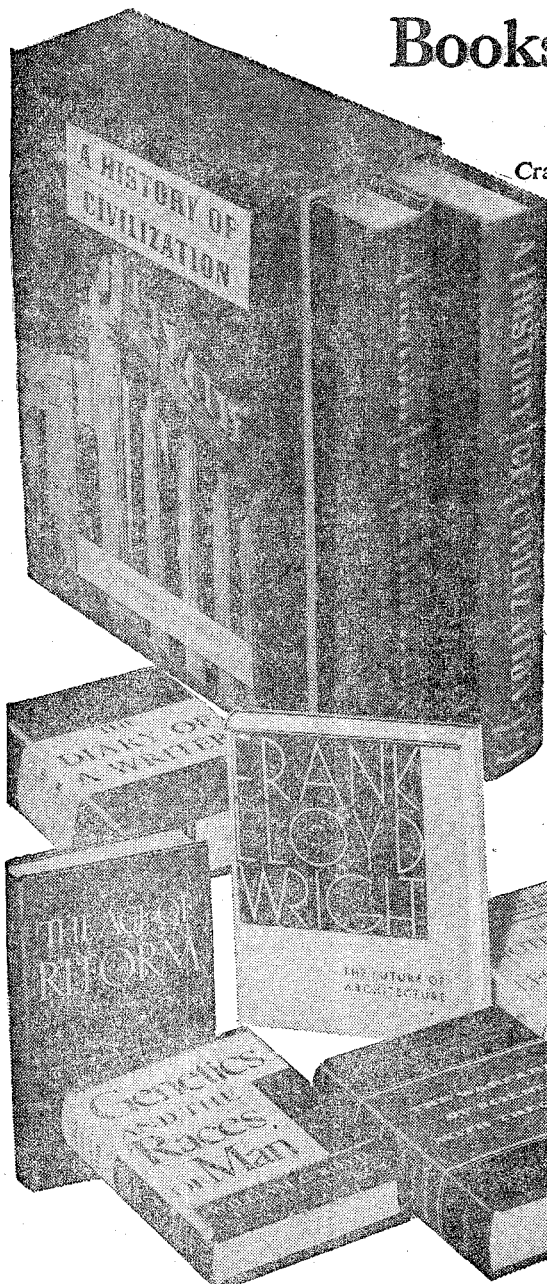
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